

# Quarterly of the California Historical Society

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# CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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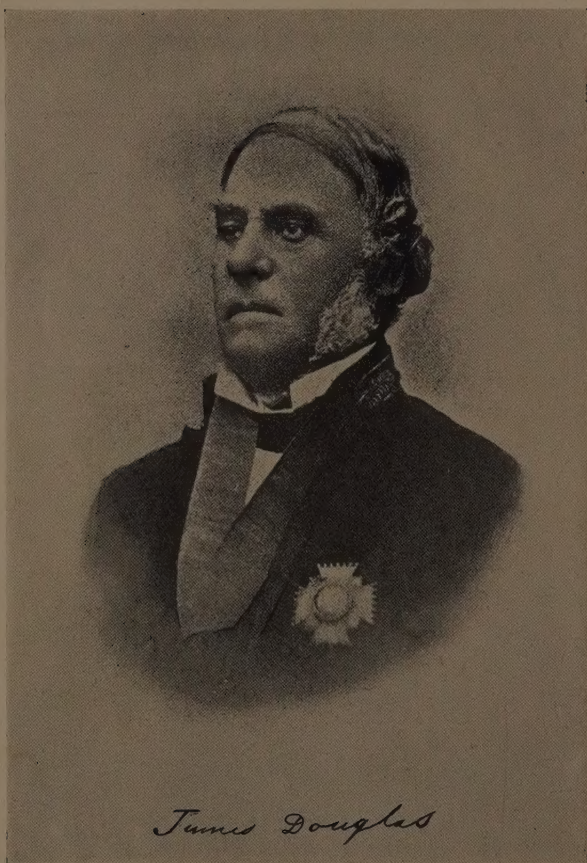
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SIR JAMES DOUGLAS

Born 1803; died 1877

As Douglas was knighted in 1863, he must have been at least sixty years old when the above portrait was made.



## Quarterly of the California Historical Society

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### A VOYAGE FROM THE COLUMBIA TO CALIFORNIA IN 1840

FROM THE JOURNAL OF SIR JAMES DOUGLAS

#### INTRODUCTION

James Douglas, the author of the following diary, was one of the most prominent characters in the early history of the Pacific Northwest. At an early age he had joined the North West Company of Canada. Upon the coalition of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company under the name of the latter, he entered the service of the new organization. When John McLoughlin was appointed to take charge of the Columbia Department of the former North West Company, Douglas accompanied him. After several years of apprenticeship in the wilds of New Caledonia, the present northern British Columbia, he was called to Fort Vancouver in 1828. Here, at the headquarters of the Pacific Department of the Hudson's Bay Company, he rose rapidly in rank and at the time of his visit to California was a chief factor and second in command to McLoughlin, the famous governor of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs west of the Rocky Mountains. Upon the retirement of McLoughlin, Douglas succeeded to his position. Soon after the Oregon Boundary Treaty Douglas moved to Victoria, of which he was the founder. He served several terms as governor of Vancouver Island and as governor of British Columbia. Among other honors he was awarded that of knighthood. He died at Victoria in 1877.

Douglas' visit to California occurred in 1840. His motives, as his diary discloses, were mainly commercial in character. For many years prior to the visit trapping brigades from the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Fort Vancouver had ranged the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin and along the coast in the insatiable quest for the beaver. This they had done despite Mexican laws prohibiting the entry of foreigners without express permission of the government. But Mexican law was futile in this case as in many other respects. The authorities, unable or unwilling to eject the trappers, compromised with the situation and allowed them to continue their employment under restriction. However, Sutter, the semi-independent lord at New Helvetia, protested against the inroads of the trappers and threatened to use force against them. It was the aim of Douglas to adjust these difficulties. This he did and the trappers from the Columbia continued to exploit the fur resources of California, subject, of course, to governmental regulations.

The Hudson's Bay Company also desired to engage in trade in California.

The company regarded California as a source of food supplies which it had agreed to furnish the Russian American Fur Company in Alaska. If successful in the first enterprise, the company might enlarge the scope of its operations. Certainly other traders thought such a result might ensue.

To carry out this plan Douglas knew that the favor of the authorities was necessary to evade the strict enforcement of Mexican law. Douglas was successful and secured permission to purchase land at Yerba Buena, where the company maintained a trading post for several years. Here English goods were exchanged for wheat, hides and tallow. Posts were not erected elsewhere in California. The post at Yerba Buena, though profitable, was sold out, for various reasons, in 1846 upon the eve of the gold rush. If Sir George Simpson had envisaged the future, it is safe to say that the Hudson's Bay Company never would have abandoned California.

HERMAN LEADER.

#### A VOYAGE FROM THE COLUMBIA TO CALIFORNIA IN 1840<sup>1</sup>

1840 Decr. 3rd Left Fort Vancouver<sup>2</sup> this morning at 8 o'clock with Mr. Wood<sup>3</sup> and 6 men, with 2 Indians to join the "Columbia"<sup>4</sup> at Fort George.<sup>5</sup> We are afterwards to proceed with an adventure of goods to California with a view jointly of purchasing the products of that Country,<sup>6</sup> and forwarding a large herd of live stock<sup>7</sup> by the overland route to the Columbia, under escort of a party of 30 officers and men now on board the vessel.

We have also other objects of a political nature<sup>8</sup> in view, which may or may

<sup>1</sup> This account of a voyage from the Columbia to California is taken from the Douglas Journal, a manuscript in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>2</sup> Fort Vancouver was the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains until the settlement of the Oregon boundary. Its location was about one hundred and twenty miles from the mouth of the Columbia and upon the northern side of the river. The post was named in honor of the famous British navigator and explorer, Captain George Vancouver.

<sup>3</sup> William Wood was supercargo of the *Columbia*. He assisted Douglas in securing the wild California cattle for the northward drive. See Douglas Letter Book, MS, in Provincial Archives, Victoria, B. C. H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 564.

<sup>4</sup> The *Columbia* was one of the numerous sailing vessels employed by the Hudson's Bay Company in the coastwise and Sandwich Island trade. The *Cowlitz* and *Cadborough* were other such vessels. Douglas, "Voyage to Sitka," MS, 86-87, in Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

<sup>5</sup> The original name "Astoria" was changed to Fort George in 1813 when the Pacific Fur Company sold out to the North West Company.

<sup>6</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company as a result of Douglas' journey to California established a trading post at Yerba Buena. British goods were exchanged for hides, wheat and tallow. Wheat, especially, was in demand for export to the Sandwich Islands and Russian Alaska. Mexican law forbade foreigners to trade in California, but such was the demand for finished wares and so lax was the enforcement of the law that smuggling was constant and obvious.

<sup>7</sup> Ewing Young early conceived the idea of bringing cattle into Oregon from California. In 1837 he drove the first lot into the Willamette Valley. Sketch of Ewing Young in *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions* for 1880, 58. Wilkes, *Narrative*, IV, 384.

<sup>8</sup> The historian has ample scope to indulge his speculation as to the character of "objects of a political nature." Certainly neither Douglas nor Sir George Simpson would have viewed with dissatisfaction the extension of British control over Alta California. Larkin was inclined to disquietude about the political and commercial ambitions of the Hudson's Bay Company in California. Larkin, Documents, MS, I, 122. Simpson, *Narrative*, I, 409-410. Vallejo, Documents, MS, XXXIII, 349.



not succeed according to circumstances, but in the event of success the results will be important. We passed the vessel<sup>9</sup> in the Tongue Point Channel<sup>10</sup> and arrived at Fort George on Friday evening 4th.

Decr. 6 The vessel got down on Sunday morning. We went on board immediately and stood down the South Channel to Clatsop.<sup>11</sup> In running over to the N. shore a strong ebb tide set the ship bodily onto the east angle of Sandy Island,<sup>12</sup> and compelled us to bring up in 12 fms.<sup>13</sup> right abreast of the breakers. To us landmen the prospect around us is sufficiently gloomy; danger on every side, and our safety depending on a chain, one defective link in which might prove our destruction.

Decr. 7 Very stormy weather. Unable to leave our anchorage.

8 On Tuesday morning we got under weigh and brought up in Baker's Bay.<sup>14</sup> The wind not being favourable for leaving the River, we must await a favourable chance here.

9 Wind from the Eastward; fair.

10 Do Westward; showery.

11 A violent storm from the Southward with rain and dark hazy weather.

Decr. 12 The weather fully as bad as yesterday. A violent wind, rain and thick weather.

21 A fine North-Easterly breeze which sprung up yesterday has completely laid the bar swell and we got out of Baker's Bay this afternoon at about  $\frac{3}{4}$  ebb, and we were clear of the Bar in 30 minutes.<sup>15</sup> The weather which has been fine since Saturday last continued so with a fair wind until the evening which had all the appearance of the close of a day in the month of June, the air being mild, the sky clear, the stars shining brightly and the sea smooth. No dew is falling however a circumstance that leads us to expect an unfavourable change of weather.

From the glimpse I have had of the Columbia Bar it strikes me that no sketch of it which I have seen is correct. It is generally laid down as a strait (?) channel from the Bar to Cape Disappointment whereas the Point of the North Spit lies a full mile and a half South of it, and distant from it not over a mile

<sup>9</sup> The *Columbia*.

<sup>10</sup> Tongue Point is located at the extremity of a short extension of land that juts into the Columbia River from the south side and opposite Gray's Bay. Tongue Point Channel as represented on the map of Wilkes' Expedition extends across that stretch of the Columbia between the upper and lower flats. Tongue Point was named by Lieutenant Broughton, a subordinate of Vancouver. Vancouver, *Voyages*, III, 53. Wilkes, *Exploring Expedition*, Map No. 2, 1841.

<sup>11</sup> South Channel was also called South Clatsop Channel. At the time of Douglas' journey there was a village of Clatsop Indians near the site of Fort Stevens. Wilkes, *Exploring Expedition* Map No. 1, 1841.

<sup>12</sup> Sandy Island or Sand Island lay at the entrance of the Columbia about midway between Point Adams and Cape Disappointment. Its contour was constantly shifting.

<sup>13</sup> About sixty feet of water.

<sup>14</sup> Baker's Bay or Baker Bay near the mouth of the Columbia River was named by Lieutenant Broughton, whom Captain Vancouver sent to explore the Columbia.

<sup>15</sup> The difficulty and dangers encountered by the *Columbia* in crossing the bar often compelled vessels to lie at anchor for weeks before a favorable combination of tide and wind occurred. Simpson, *Narrative*, I, 258-259. Wilkes, *Narrative*, V, 153-154.

and a half, so that vessels leaving the Cape must run a little east of south, until they make the spit; and south west afterward a course very far from straight. If the South Channel were safe it would be of great importance to vessels either leaving or entering the River. The risk of accident to incoming vessels would be diminished while any wind from South East to North West would take a vessel out consequently cases of tedious detention in Baker's Bay would not be so frequent. The North Spit should be distinguished by a buoy to enable vessels to go out and enter it when there is no break upon it, which often happens with strong easterly breeze.

Decr. 25 Christmas Day. Overcome with sea sickness so as to be incapable of enjoying it. Columbia making very little progress.

27 Had service during the day as usual. North Easterly breeze sprung up this morning at 6; light at first but it gradually increased to a steady 6 mile breeze and lasted all day.

1841

Jany. 1 Calms & light baffling winds delayed our arrival until the afternoon of this day when we anchored safely in the harbour of Monterey. We had rather a critical escape off Point Pinos<sup>16</sup> as we were entering the harbour. The wind fell light and we were swept within a cable's length of the rocks upon which a heavy surf was breaking. The anchor was cast and as it fortunately continues calm we warped the vessel offshore and ran into port with a N. W. breeze that sprang up very opportunely.

The officers of the customs paid us a visit and left a waiter to remain on board until the duties be settled. A doctor Bale<sup>17</sup> who came on board with the officers of the customs took tea with us and remained on board until 6 o'clock. He informed us that most of the respectable people in town were assembled in the ball room, and as strangers, observed he, are generally desirous of seeing the peculiar manners and customs of countries they visit, we would perhaps wish to join the ball. I replied we could not think of forcing ourselves on a party of perfect strangers without an express invitation. O says the free and easy doctor I am master of the ceremonies and can invite whom I please. The offer was truly very inviting but a suspicion of the Doctor's veracity, and a hint from a friend who knew his character led us to decline the offer. And it was fortunate we did so, as we afterwards discovered that he was not even invited himself.

Saty 3 Called this morning on Govr. Alvarado<sup>18</sup> but found him in his office engaged. I told him I wished to speak with him on particular business, and he invited me to call at his house in the afternoon when he would be at

<sup>16</sup> Point Pinos (La Punta de Pinos) is situated a few miles from Monterey and beyond Pacific Grove.

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Edward Turner Bale, an English surgeon, arrived in California in 1837 at the age of 29. For some years he practiced medicine in Monterey. During the years 1840-43 he was surgeon of the California forces. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, 708. Lyman, *The Scalpel Under Three Flags in California*, 14-15.

<sup>18</sup> Juan Bautista Alvarado was one of the most notable characters in the Mexican period of California history. Several years before the time of Douglas' visit he had secured the governorship by a "California" *coup d'état*.



leisure, to receive any communications I wished to make. He expressed regret at his imperfect knowledge of the English language, and a wish that Mr. Spence<sup>19</sup> should accompany me as interpreter. I called in company with Mr. Spence at the appointed hour and found him at home. He is a middle-sized man, rather stout, good looking with a harassed jaded air.

He received us with a sort of reserved courtesy, that made us feel rather uncomfortable. I saw there was something wrong, some lurking suspicions of fancied encroachments, or meditated deception on my part, and I prepared to remove them. To resent such conduct would have been more manly, and was the first impulse of my own feelings, but second thoughts are best, and in this instance I found the truth of the adage, as in course of conversation this stiffness of manner wore off, and he insensibly entered with great spirit into the matters under discussion. The first topic introduced was a delicate one, relating to our party under Laframboise<sup>20</sup> who have been for several years trapping in the valley of Tulares.<sup>21</sup>

I told him that they had been employed in the Tulares in consequence of the communications he had made to Laframboise in '37/'38, and to which I had subsequently replied, informing him of the steps taken to carry out the letter of the Treaty<sup>22</sup> as far as was consistent with our obligations as subjects of Great Britain, and that in consequence we were still maintaining our party in the country on the strength of that convention, and therefore strictly speaking with the sanction and consent of Government; that Capt. Souter<sup>23</sup> had written last summer to the Columbia prohibiting the return of our party to the Tulares, but having no information that he was an accredited agent of Government we disregarded the notice and continued to act in conformity with the Provisions of the Treaty.

He said he had authorised Souter to act in the name and on behalf of Government, not in a hostile manner but simply to request Laframboise to withdraw further from the Settlements. He also observed that he was satisfied with the conduct of our parties. He was assured that they had acted correctly, and though complaints had been often made to him against our people, he had found

<sup>19</sup> David Spence, a Scotchman, came to California in 1824 to superintend the meat-packing establishment of Hartnell and Company at Monterey. Later he went into business for himself and became wealthy. By marriage into a Spanish family he became a Mexican citizen and received a large grant of land. Bancroft, *History of California*, V, 730-31.

<sup>20</sup> Michael La Framboise or Laframboise was a French Canadian in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company. He led numerous parties of trappers into California from Fort Vancouver. Wilkes describes him at some length. Kelley, *Narrative of the Colonization of Oregon*, 11. Wilkes, *Narrative*, IV, 349.

<sup>21</sup> The term "Tulare" refers to the valley that encircles the present Tulare Lake in Tulare County. The tule beds were a choice habitat of the beaver and muskrat. Sometimes applied to the San Joaquin.

<sup>22</sup> In the use of the word "Treaty" Douglas seems to emphasize the unlimited powers of the Hudson's Bay Company. The company was, of course, subject to the British Parliament.

<sup>23</sup> Sutter engaged in the fur trade and resented the encroachment of the Hudson's Bay Company upon territory he held to be within his preserves. As alcalde he claimed he acted within his legal premises in excluding foreigners from California trade. Sutter, "Personal Reminiscences," MS, 63 *et seq.*

on inquiry that they were preferred by persons who confounded the American with our parties and unjustly charged upon the Company's servants the ruffianly outrages committed on the frontiers by the banditti of the mountains. He further expressed a wish that the party should be withdrawn as the Settlements now extended to their hunting grounds, and their presence could no longer be tolerated there, consistently with the laws of California.<sup>24</sup> I told him in reply that the wishes of government when officially communicated to us would be attended to in this and every other particular.<sup>25</sup>

The laws of Mexico permit foreign vessels to enter only at certain ports of the Republic where imports from abroad must be landed, so that the whole of the Coast transport is done by national vessels. This law had never been enforced on this coast, in consequence of there being no national vessels belonging to the Department, but the Governor informed me that he had lately received orders from Mexico to enforce the regulation at whatever inconvenience it might produce in the country, and that conceiving it his duty he had made up his mind to do so.

I warmly contested the justice of this proceeding on the ground that we had entered into arrangements under the sanction of the former law, which we ought to have time to conclude before the new regulations were enforced. He admitted the force of my reason and said he would do everything in his power to forward our present views, and moreover, that we might open & carry on any business we thought proper in the Californias with the express sanction of Government. This friendly declaration did not exonerate us from further difficulties with respect to our intended purchases of cattle or small stock for the purpose of being driven out of the country, on account of the indiscreet use made of the privilege; and finally made it known that Government<sup>26</sup> would furnish the number we required at \$6 for choice cows, and \$2 for ewes of the same quality. To this proposition I had no alternative but to consent, though I could probably have made a cheaper purchase from other persons. So terminated our interview. The following day the vessel was cleared out by the officers of the Customs in a more delicate and gentlemanly manner than even in our own country. The head of the Customs Don Antonio Osio<sup>27</sup> is a gentlemanly person and a man of strict

<sup>24</sup> Jan. 4, 1841, Alvarado wrote to the alcalde at San Francisco to urge him to cause the withdrawal of Laframboise and the Hudson's Bay Company's trappers until a decision in regard to their status was arrived at. Departmental Records, MS, XII, 1.

<sup>25</sup> An agreement between the California government and the company was reached. The company was permitted to bring in thirty trappers at the principal ports of entry. The trappers must become Mexican citizens and conform to the laws of the country. The company was to pay a tax of 2 shillings 6 pence upon every skin taken. Douglas claimed that no profit could be realized unless the trappers were allowed to range the entire country, whereas Vallejo wished to restrict them to the territory west of the Sacramento. The matter seems to have been left in abeyance with the result that the trapper took furs wherever possible and the weak government did nothing. Vallejo, Documents, MS, XXXIII, 177 and 182. *Ibid.*, X, 57, 77, 81.

<sup>26</sup> The live-stock came from government ranches which were mission property before secularization.

<sup>27</sup> Don Antonio Maria Osio served for years in various official positions in California during the Mexican period. His chief characteristics were honesty and, as a politician, timidity. He is the author of a History of California. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 761-762.



integrity. We kept him to dinner and entertained him handsomely. Sales went on rapidly. I concluded my purchases from Government, entered into correspondence with the Governor on the subject of our commercial projects, which received every encouragement from him, on our respective letters, per Letter Book.

Entertained the Governor and a party of gentlemen on board the "Columbia," and started on the 19th from Monterey with a party for San Francisco.

The Government of California is administered by a Governor in Chief and a general of the forces.<sup>28</sup> The former possesses a nominal control, which the latter does not in all cases submit to. These appointments are held under the supreme government of Mexico. The Customs and Commissariat Departments are managed by officers also holding distinct appointments from the supreme government, and who exercise their peculiar powers independently of the governor.

The sole Legislative power of the country is vested in a Junta Departmental or Deputation<sup>29</sup> annually convened at Monterey. It consists of 7 members, being one for each district elected by Committees of citizens chosen for the purpose by the general body of householders in each district. The Junta possesses great power. Its decisions can be reversed only by act of the supreme government, the local authorities having no power to do so, the governor having merely the honorary privilege of presiding at their meetings without a voice in their decisions.<sup>30</sup>

The Judicial authority is that of Alcalde or Justice of the Peace, an office seldom adequately filled by persons of education or a competent knowledge of the existing laws. Such is the entire body of civil, military and judicial polity. No power is effectively supreme throughout the Department. The military head claims, and his claims are virtually admitted, an independent jurisdiction on the frontiers, while the Custom House regulations empower the officers of the Customs to retain their salaries from the duties levied on foreign shipping, and they deliver the balance only to the Commissary General who receives only 5 per cent on his Disbursements.

There is no judicial organization in the country beyond the appointment of Alcalde, and an inferior office in the Country for deciding disputes arising between farmers about their cattle.<sup>31</sup> Courts of Justice are unknown, so that crimes remain unpunished, or are visited with instant vengeance by the decision of the Governor. The annual expenses of the government are \$100,000. The Import Duties vary from 40,000 to 60,000 dols; the balance the persons in office must scrape together the best way they can by despoiling the Missions and dis-

<sup>28</sup> At the time of Douglas' visit Juan B. Alvarado was governor and Mariano G. Vallejo was comandante general.

<sup>29</sup> *Diputación*.

<sup>30</sup> While theoretically the governor was merely presiding officer of the *diputación*, in practice the history of California illustrates the overshadowing power of the governor.

<sup>31</sup> Superior courts had been provided for by Mexican legislation, but the law was not carried out. Bancroft, *California Pastoral*, 582-583.



posing of public property, as Mexico does not contribute a real<sup>32</sup> to the support of California.

The boundaries of California on the Pacific are to the Southward, St. Diego, Lat. 32.39.30" North, and Solano to the Northward Lat. 37.59 North.<sup>33</sup>

A foreigner desirous of settling in the country can obtain letters of naturalization with the utmost facility, provided he be of respectable character, the law merely requiring that any such person shall have resided one year in the Department, and shall produce to the Alcalde of the district a certificate from three citizens that the applicant professes the Roman Catholic religion, is an honest man and possesses an income of 1000 dols. per annum, and on the strength of that document the Governor issues letters of naturalization. These however do not secure the full and unlimited privileges of natural born subjects, as it is an indispensable condition that he should be married to a native Mexican before "real property," that is, land, can be either obtained or legally held. All of these qualifications are however, in many instances dispensed with as the law is not strictly enforced at present, but there may in such cases, be danger of the validity of such informal grants being questioned.

To obtain land a memorial is laid before the Governor. If the memorial be favorably entertained he gives his assent in a formal deed which must be laid before the Junta, and by another deed confirmed by them.<sup>34</sup> The District Alcalde then proceeds with his officers to measure and survey the lot and furnishes a plan of it. A copy of this together with an exclusive brand and ear mark for cattle accompanies the titles from the Junta which are registered in its archives. No other person has a right to use that brand and any animal bearing that particular stamp may be claimed and recovered on application to the authorities, as it may be presumed to belong to the only legal owner of the brand.

The titles to an estate consist therefore of a:

- 1 Deed from the Civil Gov<sup>r</sup>. then being.
- 2<sup>d</sup> Do " " Junta Departmental.
- 3<sup>d</sup> A plan of the Estate from D<sup>o</sup>.
- 4 A brand and ear mark for stock from D<sup>o</sup>.

Government grants of land are not alienable by sale or gift, from the family of the grantee without the assent of the supreme authorities of the Department to such transfer when alone it can be made. The owner has therefore merely the right of occupancy, and not of absolute possession.

The Mission of San Diego was the first establishment formed in Upper California in 1769. Monterey was settled the following year, and the other missions were gradually formed from year to year afterwards. Each mission was provided by the Spanish government with a guard of soldiers for its protection. These sol-

<sup>32</sup> A small silver coin of the Spanish American countries.

<sup>33</sup> The northern boundary was 42° north latitude. Mission San Francisco Solano was approximately the most northern Mexican settlement.

<sup>34</sup> "The cost of obtaining possession of land was about \$12." Bancroft, *California Pastoral*, 357.

diers ultimately received lands, and settled upon them, intermarrying for want of better wives with the native women; other women were subsequently brought from Mexico, from whom jointly are descended the present population consisting of about 6000 souls.<sup>35</sup>

The attention of the commercial world was first attracted to this part of the Coast by the great mercantile House of Begg & Co.<sup>36</sup> of Valparaiso, who were the first to enter into the business of this country. They erected premises at Monterey in 1824 and gave the management of this branch of their business to Mr. Hartnell, a clerk from their house in Valparaiso, who was paid by a share of the profits; Mr. Spence<sup>37</sup> was placed with him as clerk and assistant. The House had entered into a contract with the missions, the only establishments of that day, and then in great prosperity, to receive all the hides and tallow of the country, at the rate of 2 dollars for each of the former, and 2 dollars per arroba<sup>38</sup> of tallow, payable half in goods, and half in cash.<sup>39</sup> The House did not thrive;<sup>40</sup> probably through defective management, and the premises are now in ruins. The business afterwards fell into the hands of several American Houses and of Adventurers from England and the Sandwich Islands, and is now carried on by the following merchants, viz<sup>t</sup>. Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Bryan and Sturges<sup>41</sup> of Boston, who bring their goods direct from America; they trade on liberal terms, generally at an advance of 100 per cent, on cost with charges, and never calculate on clearing over 10 per cent, which they consider a fair profit; they have three vessels on the coast, the ship *California* and ship *Alerte*<sup>42</sup> of about 320 tons English measurement, and the *Monsoon*. The *California* & *Alerte* belong exclusively to the House, while they are only part owners of the *Monsoon*. With these three vessels they do all their business, alternately employing them in transporting goods from America, managing the coast trade, and carrying out

<sup>35</sup> Bancroft estimated the population in 1840 at 5,780 *gente de razon* and 9,140 Indians. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 699.

<sup>36</sup> Although Begg and Company of Lima and Glasgow was the first commercial house to have connections in California, trade had been carried on with foreign ships for years.

Hugh McCulloch and William Edward Petty Hartnell, members of the firm McCulloch, Hartnell and Company, came to California as agents of Begg and Company. The former returned to Lima, while Hartnell remained to carry on the business of Hartnell and Company, which was an agency of Begg and Company. He became a naturalized citizen and a permanent resident of California. *Ibid.*, II, 475 and 477. See also article by Adele Ogden in this *Quarterly*, Vol. VI, pp. 254-264.

<sup>37</sup> See footnote 19.

<sup>38</sup> The *arroba* is a measurement of about 25 pounds.

<sup>39</sup> The prices to be paid for California produce were: Hides, \$1 each, large or small; wheat, \$3 per *fanega*; tallow, \$2 per *arroba* of 25 pounds; suet, \$3; lard, \$4; soap, \$16 per hundred. A contract entered into January 1, 1823, for a period of three years stipulated that Begg & Company were to take all the hides offered and 25,000 *arrobos* of tallow and to pay either in money or goods. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, 476.

<sup>40</sup> Hartnell & Company was involved in the failure of John Begg & Company. The relationship between the two companies was dissolved and Hartnell continued in business for himself. *Ibid.*, III, 127-128.

<sup>41</sup> Bryant, Sturgis & Company of Boston.

<sup>42</sup> Bryant, Sturgis & Company are given as owners of the *California* and *Alert* in Bancroft's marine list for 1831-1835. The *Monsoon* is given in the list for 1836-1840 without mention of ownership. Its point of lading was Boston. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 381, footnote; IV, 100, footnote.

the produce of the country. They are fitted up with large trading rooms, having shelves for the reception of goods, and the necessary weights and measures. Two active supercargoes acquainted with the language and country are placed in each vessel, who on the moment of their arrival in port, ride out into the country with their Books of Samples, and call from house to house, according to a list they carry in their possession to display their samples, and procure orders for goods, which on their return to the ship, they forward and receive payment in the killing season. This House is cautious in giving advances, but every one engaged in retail trade must do so to a greater or less extent.

*English flag:* Captains Scott & Wilson,<sup>43</sup> two scotchmen who are married in the country, and settled at Santa Barbara; they manage their own business, purchase their goods in Lima, and command their own two vessels,<sup>44</sup> the Barque Index and schooner Fly; one of which they have recently sold, to a company of Californian farmers, They have a capital of about 40,000 dollars. These two men were formerly in the employ of a Dr Robertson of Lima, formerly in this trade, who on retiring, made his business over to them.

*National Flag.* Mr Aguire,<sup>45</sup> a Mexican, who has lately received into partnership, Mr Miguel Pedrovena,<sup>46</sup> the most popular and best salesman on the coast, owns two National Vessels,<sup>47</sup> the Barque Ipezcuhana & Brig Juan Joseph; he deals largely on credit, and sells high about 300 pr cent on cost, calculating that if he collects only one half of these outstanding amounts, still to make handsome profits.

*National flag.* Mr. Vermond<sup>48</sup> a rich German merchant of Acapulco, married there to a Spanish Lady, owns two national vessels, the Barques Clariet and Catalina. Mr Celis manages his business.

*American Flag.* Mess<sup>rs</sup>. Thompson, Jones & Nigh get their goods at the Sandwich Islands; have one vessel, the "Bolivar."<sup>49</sup>

*National Flag.* The Dart a small vessel partly owned by Mr Kinlay<sup>50</sup> a scotchman formerly a cooper in Mr Hartnells employ.

*National Flag.* Captain Fitch who owns the schooner Moss.<sup>51</sup> Being in all

<sup>43</sup> James Scott and John Wilson. Bancroft, *History of California*, V, 714 and 777.

<sup>44</sup> Given in Bancroft's marine list for 1836-1840. *Ibid.*, IV, 100, footnote.

<sup>45</sup> José Antonio Aguirre owned several vessels and engaged in the coastwise trade. *Ibid.*, II, 688.

<sup>46</sup> Also spelled "Pedrorena" and "Pedrona." *Ibid.*, III, 382. Wilkes, *Narrative*, V, 215.

<sup>47</sup> The brigs *Joven Guipuzcoana* and *Juan José*. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 104.

<sup>48</sup> Mr. Henry Virmond of Acapulco, who did a large business with California and owned among other vessels the *Catalina* and *Clara* or *Clarita*. Eulogio Celis acted as supercargo of both vessels. Bancroft gives 1828 as the date of the arrival of Virmond in California; 1827 is given in another account. *Ibid.*, III, 381; IV, 563; V, 764. Dale, *Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific*, 236.

<sup>49</sup> Gorham H. Nye, John C. Jones and Roderick are given as masters of the *Bolivar* and A. B. Thompson as supercargo. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 563.

<sup>50</sup> James McKinley passed most of his life as a commercial traveler along the California coast. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 725.

<sup>51</sup> The schooner *Morse* is probably meant, of which Henry Fitch was half owner. *Ibid.*, III, 739; *ibid.*, IV, 105.



eleven vessels almost constantly employed on this coast and effecting sales and purchases nearly in the same manner, that is, by running up accounts with the farmers of the country at long credits payable as they kill off cattle. The retail business of this country as at present conducted, by means of travelling salesmen, who range through the length and breadth of the country, with books of samples under their arms, is unavoidably attended with a heavy expense in the shape of salaries, while the system of giving large credits, places the merchant in a state of great insecurity. Its baneful influence also on the people of the country is seen in their dishonest practises and improvident habits; for instance a farmer after greatly involving himself in dealing with one vessel, will often forget his liabilities and sell elsewhere the produce he intended for his creditors, who may have to wait another year, before he receives payment.

There are of course honest men in the country, who punctually meet their engagements, and if we enter into the California trade, I would advise that we should do business exclusively with such persons of good character. For this purpose we ought to confine our attention to a wholesale business, supplying the country merchants with goods, and receiving payment from them, in hides, tallow, and grain. By pursuing this plan, we would be secure from great risks. A much less expensive establishment would be necessary, the presence of a vessel would not be constantly required on the coast, and with these advantages we might calculate on doing a safe and profitable business, whereas the retail trade would involve us in heavy expenses, and we have no people competent to carry it on, and compete with the clever, active men now engaged in it, who speak the language fluently, and know almost every person in California. We ought at all events to start as wholesale dealers, and as we acquire experience in the trade, and qualified agents to manage it, we may find it proper to enter into the minuter ramifications of the business.

As San Francisco is the Port considered most favourable, from its growing trade, for the opening of a mercantile establishment, I think we ought either to erect, or purchase premises at the Yerba Buena, the most convenient place for shipping, within the limits of the Port.<sup>52</sup> One gentleman with two trusty servants might manage the affairs of the establishment; but it would be better, to have two attached to it, as the presence of the principal agent, would be occasionally wanted at Monterey to enter consignments and settle matters amicably with the Custom House authorities, as any mismanagement with these people would convert them into bitter enemies, and a source of infinite annoyance.

If the Company do not wish to confine our transactions to the Port of San Francisco alone but also consider it desirable to extend our transactions to all

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<sup>52</sup> Before returning to Fort Vancouver, Douglas had reached an agreement with Alvarado by which the Hudson's Bay Company would be permitted to establish a trading post within the port of San Francisco. Also their vessels might engage in California trade if put under the Mexican flag and the commanders naturalized. This agreement was approved by Chief Factor McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver and a commercial establishment was set up in San Francisco. Vallejo, Documents, MS, XXXIII, 177.

the ports in Upper California, it will become a matter of calculation whether the business can be managed to most advantage by vessels, or by having establishments in the greatest seaport towns, such as San Francisco, Monterey, San Pedro, and San Diego.<sup>53</sup>

The American vessels after entering at Monterey and receiving a general trading permit from the Custom House, proceed to the Port of *San Francisco* — has a few houses at Yerba Buena.

Mission La Purissima<sup>54</sup> is simply an ecclesiastical establishment nearly in ruins \$2000 exports.

Santa Barbara a flourishing town larger than Monterey with a few farms in the neighborhood, estimated exports in tallow and hides \$25,000.

*San Pedro* the Pueblo de los Angeles a considerable place is about 8 leagues interior of the port. The neighboring country is fine and well settled. The port is dangerous in winter. Estimated exports in hides and tallow, \$100,000.

*San Diego* a fine harbor, a small town of 50 houses, country settled around. Estimated exports, \$10,000.

Monterey is the capital of the Department. The neighboring country is covered with farms. Its exports of hides & tallow, \$20,000. The Pueblo de Santa Clara<sup>55</sup> and a great number of farms in its vicinity; and the estimated annual exports in grease, hides and grain exceed 80,000 dollars. Thence to the Mission of San Luis<sup>56</sup> situated 8 leagues interior of the port, there is no town, but the country is covered with pasture farms. Its estimated exports are \$4000. Total 241,000 dols.

Of the exports of California, hides may be considered the principal article (70,000); tallow, the next in importance; and grain the last. The District south of Monterey is not a wheat country, and produces barely enough for its own consumption. From Monterey itself there is seldom any quantity exported, and San Francisco is the only Port where any considerable purchases can be made of the article. It is intended by the Provincial Government to enforce the Mexican law prohibiting foreign vessels from engaging in the coasting trade, or rather, compelling them to limit their dealings to the single port of Monterey, the only port of entrance within the limits of Upper California. All that a foreign vessel can now do is after entering his vessel, to build or hire a house on shore, wherein he may sell his goods, as is done even in the City of Mexico.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company confined itself in the main to wholesale trade because of the reasons in favor of that policy which were advocated by Douglas.

<sup>54</sup> Mission La Purissima Concepción was founded in 1787 by Father Lasuen near Lompoc.

<sup>55</sup> Douglas probably confused the mission of Santa Clara and the pueblo of San José. No pueblo was established at Santa Clara. The pueblo of San José was founded in 1777. It was about three miles distant from the mission of Santa Clara. Later, in 1797, the mission of San José was founded some fourteen miles distant from the present city of San José.

<sup>56</sup> The Mission of San Luis Obispo in the city of San Luis Obispo was founded by Father Serra in 1772.

<sup>57</sup> No real attempt was ever made by the California authorities to enforce the Mexican laws against coastwise trading by foreigners. Monterey was the sole port of entry, which caused considerable inconvenience. Once the cargo had been entered and the duties paid at

A foreigner may however avoid all inconvenience by becoming a denizen of the country and taking out fresh papers of registry for his vessel, which can be obtained from the Mexican authorities at San Blas.<sup>58</sup> In such a case it is necessary to surrender the British Certificate of Registry to the British Consul there, who is solely responsible for its delivery in England. There is a severe penalty against any vessel carrying double sets of papers.

All vessels trading on the coast of California should be provided with cash enough to pay the duties. The Custom House can exact the full amounts of all sums due on imports, not exceeding 4000 dols. in cash. When the duties on any single cargo exceed that sum they must accept part goods at the current price, but then they will receive only the most saleable articles, and often do much injury to a consignment by breaking the assortment.

If there be a want of cash to meet the legal dues of the Custom House choice goods will be accepted instead at a reduction of 25 pr. ct. on the current price.

There is no possibility of borrowing cash here under the rate of 2 per ct. of monthly interest.

Any Mexican citizen may obtain lands to the extent of 3 square leagues on application to the Governor. That is simply however the right of occupation, as the holder can neither sell nor mortgage his land.

House keeping is very expensive in California. Oak fuel, split is \$3 a cart-load, and rough pine in billets \$2 for the same quantity. A common farm servant receives \$3 a month, and an overseer or Maior Domo \$16, and the Indians \$6 per month.

No direct taxes whatever are levied on the inhabitants of California not engaged in trade by their government. Merchants have to pay a Municipal duty of one dollar monthly; and a Municipal charge is made on all spirituous liquors landed from vessels of \$1 per gallon. There are no other local taxes whatever.

As an instance of the way civil cases are disposed of in the strangest of all strange places, I may cite the example of a Mr. Stokes,<sup>59</sup> who summoned a farmer before the Alcalde, to compel payment of a debt which had been 2 years outstanding, contrary to the previous stipulation between the parties.

The Justice instead of meeting the case referred it to arbitration. The case was going against the farmer who entreated for a further indulgence, as if compelled to pay at that moment, he would be compelled to sell his cattle at a heavy sacrifice. Well, says the Justice, how long do you ask? Why, says the farmer, I promise to make the first instalment in 12 months hence.

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the custom house, a vessel could carry on either a wholesale or retail trade along the entire coast.

Douglas derived his idea of the intentions of the authorities to prohibit coastwise trade to foreign vessels from Alvarado's order of January, 1841, to that effect. Only a few sporadic attempts were made to enforce the order and it soon lapsed. Bancroft, *California Pastoral*, 478, 480, 481. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 206-207.

<sup>58</sup> Trade between California and Mexico generally went through the port of San Blas on the western coast of Mexico and opposite the peninsula of Lower California.

<sup>59</sup> Probably James Stokes, an English sailor who became one of the early "doctors" of California. Bancroft, *History of California*, V, 735.



Very well, replied the Justice with the utmost indifference, that will do, and the case was dismissed without further proceedings.

Within the last 2 years there have been 13 assassinations in Upper California, and the authorities have proceeded criminally against one of the criminals only. This was an aggravated case of murder, a husband, who in a transport of jealousy, stabbed his wife in 41 places, and closed the atrocious act by hewing off her head with a hatchet. The villain was brought to the Governor who ordered him to be instantly executed, and he was led out to the open square and shot without any form or trial.<sup>60</sup> How would John Bull relish such acts of summary justice?

I hear from the most unexceptionable authority that the ladies in California are not in general very refined or delicate in their conversation, using gross expressions and indulging in broad remarks which would make modest women blush.

It is said that many even of the most respectable classes prostitute their wives for hire, that is, they wink at the familiarity of a wealthy neighbor who pays handsomely for his entertainment. This infamous practice was introduced from Mexico, where it is almost general. This is done with some respect to insulted virtue. If openly asked to do so, they would feel insulted; they merely play the part of complaisant husbands.<sup>61</sup> There [seems] indeed to be a total overthrow of public morals among this degenerate people, even from the priest downwards. The Californian is proud, lazy and passionate; but kind and hospitable; the vices and virtues of a badly regulated but generous mind.

Dr. Leroy a french gentleman<sup>62</sup> who resided some months in the Brazils informed me that there is also in that country a general corruption of morals, and contempt of religion; assassination, poisonings, and every species of crime, occurring so commonly as to excite neither horror nor surprise.

The Archbishop of Rio Janeiro who has rendered himself obnoxious to a faction for the part he takes in political affairs, lives in constant dread of his enemies. The only food he uses is dressed in a neighborng convent, and is sent to him in a sealed case which he opens with his own hands. He cannot even confide in the domestics of his house, such is his terror of being poisoned.

The rainy season in California begins in Nov<sup>r</sup>. and continues until Janry. Feby. has varable weather; March and April are showery; the other months are

<sup>60</sup> This exaggerated account of the legal process is also related in Simpson's *Narrative*. The reference is to a murder committed by an ex-soldier, Diego Felix, who lived near Monterey. Felix brutally murdered his wife with a hatchet, then cut her open and killed her unborn child. As martial law prevailed because of the arrest of Graham and other Americans, Alvarado had the murderer tried by court-martial with the presence of a civil judge. Felix was shot twelve hours after the commission of the murder. Castro, *Relación de la Alta California*, MS, 57-60. Pinto, *Apuntaciones*, MS, 45-49. Simpson, *Narrative*, 328-329.

<sup>61</sup> This criticism is an exaggeration. The sexual morality of the women of California was probably equal to that of women in Anglo-Saxon countries. Criterions of morality also vary from country to country. See the chapter "Women and her Sphere," in Bancroft, *California Pastoral*.

<sup>62</sup> R. Leroy, a French surgeon at Santa Barbara and Monterey. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 712.

dry. Some seasons vary from this standard, but in general, it will be found correct. Wheat is sown from Decr. until the end of Feby. but never later as it is not found to thrive. It is reaped in July and August, and before Sept. is threshed and ready for delivery. The grain is cut with sickles 14 inches long; the greater part of the straw is left standing. It is then trodden out by horses and winnowed by the wind.

The best season to receive wheat is therefore in September, when the weather is fine & dry. If we intend to purchase wheat in great quantities, we should have a store erected at the embarkadero of Santa Clara<sup>63</sup> where the farmers would bring their wheat as we bought it, and on arrival of the vessel it would be collected in readiness for shipment and cause no delay which otherwise is very great.

We should also have 400 bags of twilled<sup>64</sup> sacking, capable of holding exactly a Fanega<sup>65</sup> each when tied, as the country people have no means of transporting wheat from their farms to the shore.

The slaughtering season begins about the middle of June and lasts nearly 3 months, during which all the trading vessels are on the move and have their agents out in all directions, selling goods and receiving payments. This is in short the most busy period of the year, when all is bustle and animation. Comparatively little business is done during the rest of the year, therefore, to effect large sales, our vessels ought to be on the coast in June, and for the purpose of shipping wheat, they should be down in Sept. before the rains set in.

The accounts given by the inhabitants of the fertility of this country, particularly in the production of wheat, are almost incredible, considering the imperfect implements of husbandry with which the land is tilled. The plough, for instance, is simply a limb cut from a tree, with a natural crook in it thus:<sup>66</sup> The end which enters the ground is shod with a thin flat plate of iron, not exceeding a pound in weight. A wooden pin is driven into the beam to which the draft shaft is fastened and with this rude implement which has neither coulter nor mould board, scooping out in the manner of a gouge, about 3 inches of turf at every passage, is every farm in California tilled at a prodigious expense in labour, both of men and animals. I saw near the Mission of Santa Clara ten of these ploughs at work, drawn by 60 oxen, with 10 Indian drivers, all following each other in the same direction, but so irregularly that scarcely 2 furrows were in parallel line. As they met, crossed and receded, according to the vagaries of the cattle. Two good ploughs, it appears to me, with 4 horses, would have done the work faster and in much superior style.

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<sup>63</sup> The embarkadero was at the head of Caravallio Creek at the lower end of San Francisco Bay, and about four miles from the mission. Wilkes, who visited the mission in 1841, the year of Douglas' visit, has a very good account of the locality and its industries, probably the present Alviso. Wilkes, *Narrative*, V, 212-228.

<sup>64</sup> Twilled so as to be of extra strength.

<sup>65</sup> The *fanega* was about 2½ English bushels.

<sup>66</sup> Here follows a crude sketch of the plough.

Mr. Forbes<sup>67</sup> told me that at the Mission San Joseph,<sup>68</sup> they generally employ 60 ploughs drawn by 160 oxen with 60 drivers, and that in old ground, this host of animals turned over about 200 square yards of farm in one day, or about 3 acres. The closing operation after the ground is sown is to drag a branch over the field for the purpose of covering the grain, the branch performing the office of harrow.

I was informed by a credible person that Joseph Jesus Vallejo,<sup>69</sup> late administrator of the Mission of St. Joseph's,<sup>70</sup> sowed 7 fanegas of wheat near that place in rows, dropped in after the plough and covered up by the next following. From that field he lifted 1190 fanegas, and so much of the grain was lost through shake, being cut overripe that the spontaneous produce of the following year, without any cultivation or attention whatever, was 600 fanegas. This is however an instance of an extraordinary crop, exceeding the general average of production which is said to be about 50 to one bushel of seed. The returns may exceed the estimate, but as they are never measured with the nice accuracy practiced in other countries, I have here given 10 per cent under the lowest average I could collect.

Indeed, the fertility<sup>71</sup> of the country must be very great, as the soil and climate are both favorable to agriculture, and bread is used by all classes, though the land under cultivation on the route I travelled is of trifling extent and bears no proportion to the population it is destined to maintain. Fruit of various kinds also grows abundantly. I saw in several gardens which I visited, pear, apple, olive, fig and peach trees growing luxuriantly. There is also a mongrel fruit grown from the pear or apple stocks grafted on each other, the fruit always bearing the greatest affinity to that of the tree from which the graft is cut. The vine is a native of this country and grows in every part of the Tulares, yielding abundance of fruit. It is also cultivated to great advantage in all parts of the country.

California is a country in many respects unrivalled by any other part of the globe. It enjoys a pleasant salubrious climate, a serene sky in summer, while in winter copious rains moisten and fertilize the earth. The soil is of various kinds, and excellent in all. The valleys are extensive and divided by lines of mountain and green hills, furnishing streams of water which diffuse fertility among the plains beneath.

There is no wood save a few scattered oaks and sycamores in the valleys, the only timber in the country being produced in the mountains. Timber is in fact inconveniently scarce, and, in some places, the natural supply of water is in-

<sup>67</sup> James Alexander Forbes was a Scotchman who had come to California in the thirties. He was a trader and farmer at San José and acted as the Hudson's Bay Company's agent there. He also acted for a time as British vice-consul. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 743.

<sup>68</sup> The mission of San José was established in 1797 some fourteen miles distant from the present city of San José.

<sup>69</sup> Brother of Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo.

<sup>70</sup> Mission of San José.

<sup>71</sup> Other visitors write of remarkable yields. Vancouver, *Voyages*, II, 19. Wilkes, *Narrative*, V, 169.



sufficient for the cattle. But notwithstanding these disadvantages there is no country that has more attractions than California.

I will now relate the incidents of our journey from Monterey to San Francisco, commenced as I before stated, on the 19<sup>th</sup> Janry.

Our party was numerous, and rather singular in its grouping, being made up of McKay,<sup>72</sup> Steel<sup>73</sup> and 11 of our own men armed to the teeth, with an Englishman by the name of Duckworth<sup>74</sup> long resident in the country, and a Californian boy, his companion in travel, who are hired to conduct us to the Mission of Santa Clara, and have engaged to furnish 8 horses, at a charge of 30 dols; and to the kindness of Gov<sup>r</sup>. Alvarado we were indebted for horses to mount the remainder of our party. Most of the Governor's horses were in a poor condition, worn to skin & bone by rough usage. Such animals surmounted by the rude saddle commonly used by our people made a very homely appearance when leaving Monterey. The Spanish, who displayed a magnificent taste in preparing the housings of their saddles, no doubt enjoyed the contrast. But our tranquility was not at all ruffled by such accidents of dress or accoutrements, and we trotted quietly out of town with as much state as if our trappings had been of cloth of gold.

We left Monterey at 2:30 pm. and soon after entered an undulating sandy plain at a considerable elevation above the level of the town from which we had just issued. This plain extending from Monterey to the Salina River<sup>75</sup> is covered with a low evergreen bush,<sup>76</sup> closely resembling wormwood, except in the absence of the pungent aroma found in that class of plants. A few diminutive live oak trees grow in the hollows, but not a blade of grass appears either on the ridges, or in the intervening depressions, the surface being a loose sand, unfit for cultivation, with an exceedingly sterile aspect. At dusk we reached the termination of the plain just described and descended into the valley of the Salina river; its banks are covered with willows of great size and the cottonwood tree. On the southern bank are 4 farm-steads; at the door of the largest of these belonging to the proprietor of the land, the worthy gentleman himself, a hale, good looking man of 60, was stationed, and courteously invited us to enter and spend the night in his house.

Our numbers led me to decline his hospitable offer, and we forded the Salina river at a place the old gentleman good-naturedly pointed out, and pitched our tents among the tall willows on its northern bank.

Jan<sup>y</sup> 20. The unfavorable impressions we had formed of the country, in our travels of yesterday, were all effaced on entering the beautiful valley of the Salina this morning. The sun had risen more than 2 hours and was shining

<sup>72</sup> Jean B. D. McKay was a hunter of the Hudson's Bay Company. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 724.

<sup>73</sup> James Steel was an employé of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. Simpson, *Narrative*, I, 244.

<sup>74</sup> Walter Duckworth came as a sailor to California, and later married a native woman by whom he had one child. *Ibid.*, III, 785.

<sup>75</sup> The Salinas River derives its name from the *salinas* (salt-marshes) lying along its course. The town of Salinas is the county seat of Monterey County.

<sup>76</sup> The chamiso plant. It is abundant on dry soils in the coast ranges and more rarely in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. *Geological Survey of California* (Botany), I, 184.

gloriously from above the mountain tops. The air was cool and the grass fresh with the dew of the night, when the prospect of this lovely spot, suddenly burst upon our view, as we emerged from the willow thickets of the river.

It lay extended before us level as a park, running to the Eastward beyond the reach of view. Ranges of low mountains bound it on 2 sides and the Salina river runs upon its border. The surface is covered with short, green grass, and its loose, friable rich soil inclining to a dark brown color excites a feeling of regret that so fine a tract should be left in a state of nature.

A few farm houses are built along the mountains on the north side of the valley. Scarcely an attempt has been made to cultivate the soil, these farmers appearing to devote their attention almost solely to the care of their cattle which constitute the present wealth of the country, and raising merely a certain quantity of grain for their own use. We rode over the valley to Mr. Hartnell's<sup>77</sup> dwelling and spent the remainder of the day and night with him. His house is built in a grove of endicidious oaks at the mouth of a retired ravine, refreshed by a cool clear rivulet of water, a luxury not always met with in this part of the world. The dwelling is thus protected from the summer heats and against the chilling winds of winter.

Green hills, rising in the back ground to the height of 3000 ft. covered thinly with pines, are on 3 sides of the house leaving it open only to the West. A flour mill of simple construction within 30 ft. of the door, is turned by the waters of the rivulet. A garden, a vineyard, and a few enclosed fields of grain, completes the number of striking objects, forming altogether a scene as romantic and replete with beauty as any the imagination can combine.

21st. Jan<sup>y</sup> 1841 We left Mr. Hartnell's hospitable roof early this morning with delightful weather. Rode along the base of the hills skirting the valley of the Salina. A stream of water gushing from the hills and a quiet farmstead in its vicinity with herds of horned cattle grazing on the sloping banks are the only objects that remind us of life amidst the solitude and desert-like stillness that otherwise reigns around.

Arrived at Mr. Gomez<sup>78</sup> and passed the night there, as we had to receive a few horses, which I bought from him while at Monterey. Besides there was no denying the hospitable entreaties with which he urged our stay, without positive incivility. He put himself to a great deal of trouble about us; every good thing in the house, whether eatable or liquid was produced for our entertainment. After a good and plentiful dinner, at which every person in the house, whether master or servant, the proscribed race of Indians only excepted, sat down without regard to age or distinction of rank. We proceeded to business and received our horses from Mr. Gomez. The evening was ushered in by a gay scene of festive amusements. The guitar was strung and its music accompanied by the voices of the ladies, which lent to it an additional charm. Parties

<sup>77</sup> See note 36, *supra*. Hartnell owned Alisal ranch in present Monterey County.

<sup>78</sup> José Joaquin Gomez came to California from Mexico in 1830. He was the person in charge of the secularization of the Mission San Carlos. His ranch of Verjeles was on the way from Monterey to San José and in the present Monterey County. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 758-759. Map of Monterey County by St. John Cox, 1877.

of dancers, awakened by the music to joyous sensations, rose up & began to trip the fantastic toe.

Wines, brandy & fruits of many kinds; figs, raisins &c graced the side board with a greater display of taste and variety of good things than the retired dwelling of Mr. Gomez would have led us to expect in such a place. So passed the evening very pleasantly, and we retired to nice clean beds, and enjoyed a most comfortable nap.

Jan<sup>y</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> Rose up at a very early hour this morning, and found our host also on the move. He was feeding poultry and lavishing much care and tenderness upon his pet birds, of which he has several of different kinds, which he keeps in cages suspended under the verandah, in front of his house. The worthy old man has evidently a feeling heart and is kind to every living creature about his establishment, and yet he neglects his own family. His wife & daughters live in another part of the country, having left their home in disgust, and she who now lives with him is not his wife, but his mistress. What a mass of inconsistency is the poor man, by turns exhibiting traces of his divine original and of his fallen degraded state.

Our road for a few miles led over a hilly country, forming a ridge of the Salina Sierra,<sup>79</sup> which we have crossed, and found the Mission of St. John's<sup>80</sup> now in ruins, in a beautiful plain situated immediately at the foot of these hills, and stretching to the Northward towards Bird's river.<sup>81</sup> Its former prosperity has passed away, its wealth and its inhabitants being now alike scattered to the four winds of heaven. There are still however some small remains of property, managed by a lay administrator or steward, who receives his salary and holds his appointment from Government. The priest has no civil control, and merely acts as chaplain or Confessor to the Mission.

Passed Bird river and took breakfast at the Laguna.<sup>82</sup> Passed a few farm houses in the next valley<sup>83</sup> to St. Johns, and encamped at Castro's farm.<sup>84</sup> This is a valley possessed of great fertility and natural beauty. On the west side, it stretches over to the range of wooded hills which borders the sea coast. The hills of Smith's river<sup>85</sup> (the St. Joachim) bounds the East side, and its Northern extremity touches the Bay of San Francisco. Wood and water are not abundant, but the latter may be easily procured by digging.

Janry. 23 Passed the Pueblo<sup>86</sup> de Santa Clara in the evening. This though the largest valley in California . . . [The California portion of the manuscript ends here abruptly.]

<sup>79</sup> Gabilan mountain ridge, a branch of the Coast Range.

<sup>80</sup> The Mission of San Juan Bautista (St. John the Baptist) was founded in 1797. The present town of San Juan at the site of the mission is in San Benito County, forty-five miles southeast of San José.

<sup>81</sup> The Anglicized form of the Spanish *pájaro*. The Pájaro River takes its rise in the Coast Range and flows into Monterey Bay. The circumstances of its naming are told in the diary of Father Crespi. *Crespi, Missionary Explorer* (edited by Herbert E. Bolton), 210-211.

<sup>82</sup> A small lake.

<sup>83</sup> Santa Clara Valley.

<sup>84</sup> Carlos Castro, who was the grantee of Las Llagas ranch in Santa Clara County. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, 750.

<sup>85</sup> The San Joaquin River was sometimes called Smith's River after Jedediah Smith, who probably was the first white man to reach it from east of the Rocky Mountains. Southern California Historical Society *Publications*, III, part IV, 48; VII, parts II-III, 181.

<sup>86</sup> See note 55, *supra*.



## FRENCH IMPERIALISTS IN CALIFORNIA

Into the harbor of dreamy Monterey, on an August day of the year 1839, sailed a frigate, the *Artémise*, flying the flag of Orleanist France. Her commander, Captain Cyrille Pierre Laplace, suavely announced to the Mexican governor that he was on a scientific tour of the world, by the orders of His Majesty, Louis Philippe. But Governor Juan B. Alvarado and other Californians of that day shrewdly conjectured that the Frenchman's "scientific observations" were closely related to French colonial possibilities in the Pacific world; and they later remembered his conduct and thinly veiled suggestions of a French protectorate, in connection with the visit of a fascinating French gentleman, M. Duflot de Mofras, to this sleepy Mexican frontier province.

One of the most obscure questions in the history of California under the Mexican régime concerns this interest of France in the country. Just how much evidence of French imperialism can be gleaned from the activities and remarks of sundry wandering Frenchmen, the peevish utterances of a Swiss soldier of fortune, or the mouthings of Orleanist diplomats and journalists is, and may always be, a matter of speculation. But the subject is one of considerable interest, whether viewed as a feature of the foreign policy of Louis Philippe, or as a character study of early Californians in the days of the relaxation of Mexican rule, when the peaceful land of the padres lay at the mercy of the foreigner.

In general, the topics covered in a survey of this question would include the visits of early French travelers and naval officers, the sprightly adventures and writings of Eugène Duflot de Mofras, and the conduct of Captain Johann A. Sutter. It is proposed in this brief examination, to take into account some of these factors which have been urged in building up a case for French imperialism in this section of the Pacific Coast. California's classic historian, Hubert Howe Bancroft, adds some other and less definite evidences, however, though they do not seem to add greatly to the proof of French interest in California.<sup>1</sup> The case for French imperialism in this part of the world rests almost entirely on the points mentioned above.

There is one general indication of early French interest in Spanish California which can best be disposed of very briefly. In 1786 the great French navigator Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de la Pérouse, visited the Californian coast.<sup>2</sup> According to one authority, this gentleman was sent out by the French government on a scientific and exploring voyage, but incidentally to seek for possible new French colonies.<sup>3</sup> He was instructed to discover "the condition, force, and aim of the Spanish settlements in the Californias," and to determine the oppor-

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, Hubert Howe, *History of California*, IV, 261, 261 n. De Mofras's works were published in Paris in 1844, and will be commented upon later.

<sup>2</sup> Chapman, Charles E., *A History of California: the Spanish Period* (New York, 1921), 344; Richman, Irving B., *California under Spain and Mexico, 1535-1847* (Boston and New York, 1911), 298.

<sup>3</sup> Chapman, *op. cit.* 401-402.

tunities "for French establishments north of Monterey."<sup>4</sup> Whatever may have been the instructions of La Pérouse, he seems to have been disappointed in the country as he found it.<sup>5</sup> Thereafter, it is forty years before there appear any more French comments on California.<sup>6</sup>

In 1827 M. Duhaut-Cilly, a French naval officer, visited the coast, and afterward wrote an account of it.<sup>7</sup> The French frigate *Venus* under Admiral Dupetit-Thouars, touched at Monterey in 1837, and in 1839, as has been noted, Captain Laplace arrived in the *Artémise*. Both of the latter commanders were given cordial receptions by the inhabitants.<sup>8</sup>

Laplace's conduct deserves special consideration. Arriving late in August, he spent several days at Monterey, besides making visits to the Russian Fort Ross and to Yerba Buena. At Monterey he seems to have been on very good terms with Governor Alvarado, from whom we have a significant account of the Frenchman's actions and remarks. According to Alvarado, Laplace warned him against the hostile intentions of the United States toward California, held several secret interviews with him, and invited him on board the *Artémise*. Says Alvarado:<sup>9</sup>

I accepted the invitation and gave him thanks for showing so much interest in Californian politics: I am of opinion that the Admiral Laplace did not take this step of his own accord, but rather by instruction of the French government; since it was well known to us that in 1838, '39, '40 and '41 the European powers looked enviously toward the United States; and although they dared not openly oppose the "Model Republic" aiding Texas, and smoothing the way for the possession of Alta California, secretly they were always working to prevent Texas and California from forming part of the union of the States of North America. . . . I feel no embarrassment in attributing the visit of the *Artémise* to an order of the French Admiralty Board.

Furthermore, in regard to the suggestion of a French protectorate for Alta California, and Laplace's treatment of Alvarado, the latter remarks:<sup>10</sup>

The admiral himself assured me that although France could not take the initiative in that sort of compact, he had the authority to say that in case we made a proper proposal through a qualified person, that proposal would be given due consideration: during all the time that the Admiral Laplace remained in Monterey, he maintained very friendly relations with me, and at the time of leaving presented me with a valuable sword. . . ."

Little significance, perhaps, would be attached to these apparently casual visitors, were it not for the relations then prevailing between France and Mexico, and the conduct of another and more important French naval expedition in 1840.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 401-402. Probably La Pérouse's instructions in regard to California were only general in character, and might have been applied to any other Spanish colony.

<sup>6</sup> The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars offer sufficient explanation for this lapse of time, for France was absorbed in greater matters than colonization during this period.

<sup>7</sup> Richman, *op. cit.*, 298-299. Duhaut-Cilly, Auguste, *Voyage autour du monde, principalement à la Californie et aux îles Sandwich, pendant les années 1826, 1827, 1828 et 1829* (2 v., Paris, 1834-1835). A translation of the California portion of this important French narrative begins in this number of the *Quarterly*.

<sup>8</sup> De Moiras, Eugène Duflot, *Exploration du territoire de l'Orégon, des Californies et de la Mer Vermeille, exécutée pendant les années 1840, 1841, et 1842* (2 v. and atlas, Paris, 1844), I, 301.

<sup>9</sup> Alvarado, Juan Bautista, *Historia de California*, MS (in Bancroft Library), III 200-202; IV, 174.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 200.

In 1838 occurred the famous "Pastry War" between France and Mexico, which has been cited as an incident in the ambitious attempts of Louis Philippe to create and maintain a vigorous foreign policy for France, and which might be regarded as a forerunner of the French expedition of 1862.<sup>11</sup> Though it was soon settled, yet for some years the French government seems to have had suppressed longings toward Mexico, and to have kept watch upon her outlying provinces, particularly California.<sup>12</sup> To bear out this opinion, there may be cited the visit of the French corvette, *Danaïde*, in 1840. In that year there occurred at Monterey the so-called "Graham affair," when Isaac Graham, an American, was accused by the Californian authorities of attempting to overturn the government, as a result of which he was seized, together with some forty other foreigners, and sent to Mexico in chains.<sup>13</sup> This incident concerns the topic under discussion only in so far as it furnishes a background for the action of Captain Rosamel of the *Danaïde*. This officer, who had been stationed with his vessel off the Mexican port of Mazatlan, heard reports of the seizure of foreigners in Monterey in connection with the Graham affair, and sailed for the Californian capital, arriving in June, 1840.<sup>14</sup> Upon his arrival, Rosamel seems to have assumed a rather unnecessarily bellicose attitude, with the apparent intention of using force to protect any French citizens who might have been molested by the provincial authorities.<sup>15</sup> According to an eye-witness (an American sea-captain who chanced to be in the harbor at the time), this procedure by Rosamel was the result of French ambitions in California, and designed to give France an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of the province, with a view to establishing claims and influence therein.<sup>16</sup> But, unfortunately for the praiseworthy efforts of M. de

<sup>11</sup> Dwinelle, John W., *Address on the Acquisition of California by the United States*. Delivered before the "Corporate Society of California Pioneers," at the 16th anniversary, September 10, 1866, of the admission of the State of California into the Federal Union (San Francisco, 1866). In "California Miscellany," collected by J. H. and C. W. Carmany, San Francisco, 1866, XIII, No. 3, 10-18; Priestley, Herbert I., *The Mexican Nation: a History* (New York, 1923), 292-293.

<sup>12</sup> Vallejo, Mariano Guadalupe, *Historia de California*, MS (in Bancroft Library) IV (1839-1845), 246. "The King of France, who since the disgraceful Pastry War, has kept a watchful eye on this country, sent to Alta California an emissary well provided with money and letters of recommendation for the leading citizens of Monterey, San Diego and Los Angeles. . . . This emissary answers to the aristocratic name of Duflot de Mofras." He is sent to California "with the purpose of preparing the animosities of the inhabitants for the project of the annexation of this department to the crown of France."

<sup>13</sup> Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, IV, 2-34.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 35.

<sup>15</sup> Phelps, W. D., *Fore and Aft* (Boston, 1871), 251-252. "It is well known that the great powers of Europe have, for many years, sought every possible opportunity of getting a foothold in California, and several times have nearly reached success. One of these approximations was in 1840. On our arrival at Monterey . . . we found at the port . . . a French corvette. They were investigating the doings of the Mexican authorities, who had accused the foreign residents of conspiring to overthrow the government. . . . The Frenchman, clothed with power and authority to obtain immediate redress, was much disappointed in not finding one of his own countrymen on the list of those sent away; had there been a single one claiming the protection of France, perhaps the flag of that nation . . . might now be floating over California. The Frenchman, with his broadside swung on the town, was only waiting for an excuse to open his battery; but finding none, his officers enjoyed themselves hugely . . . in giving and attending parties."

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*



Rosamel, it was discovered that no Frenchmen had been arrested by the Mexican officers; he therefore contented himself with enjoying the hospitality (possibly somewhat forced) of the citizens of Monterey.<sup>17</sup> Thus ended the incident of the *Danaïde*. How much proof of French imperialism can be deduced from it is difficult to say; but, taken in conjunction with the similar, and more significant exploit of the American, Commodore Jones, in 1842, it shows the general attitude of outside powers toward defenseless California in the early forties.

The conduct of Frenchmen in California at this early period gives some color to the assertions that France was at least interested in the future of the outlying provinces of Mexico. Though they were very few in number, yet they seem, if we can believe contemporary accounts, to have enjoyed considerable popularity. De Mofras estimates their number at eighty, but notes that many of them were not directly from France, but were French Canadians.<sup>18</sup> As to their position in the province, we are told that they were the only foreigners regarded with favor by the native Spanish Californians.<sup>19</sup> And a French writer at a somewhat later date, after the discovery of gold in California had caused the arrival of a greater number of French, attributes their popularity to their "constant equality of humor" and their "rollicking and carefree character, which they never abandon, either in good or bad fortune"; adding, that they were never designated as "strangers" or "foreigners," by which terms most persons of other outside nations were indicated, but always as "French friends."<sup>20</sup> The same writer goes on to say, that the French won favor with the Mexican provincial authorities by refusing to join the American residents in 1836, when the latter took a prominent part in the rebellion of that year, against Mexico.<sup>21</sup> In connection with the French share in Californian politics, it is well to note the comment of De Mofras on the treatment of Frenchmen in the Graham affair. This writer remarks that during the wholesale arrests of 1840, three or four Frenchmen who had been arrested were released almost immediately, (possibly because of the presence of the *Danaïde*), and that when the rancheros in search of foreign rebels, passed the homes of Frenchmen, they called out, "There are no foreigners here, these are French."<sup>22</sup> Frenchmen were particularly welcome, it appears, in the missions, where the padres showed them special hospitality.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 319:

"Division par nations de la Population Blanche de la Haute Californie:	
"Californiens descendants des Espagnols - - - - -	4000
Américains des Etats-Unis - - - - -	360
Anglais, Eccosais, Irlandais - - - - -	300
Espagnols européens - - - - -	80
Français, y compris quelques Canadiens - - - - -	80
Allemands, Italiens, Portugais, Sandwichois, et autres - - -	90
Colons mexicains venus du Mexique - - - - -	90

Total de la population blanche - - - - - 5000"

<sup>19</sup> Auger, Edouard, *Voyage en Californie* (Paris, 1854), 130-131.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 305-306.

<sup>23</sup> De Mofras, *Fragment d'un voyage en Californie*, *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Deuxième Série, Tome XIX, No. 109, Janvier, 1843, 13.

As to the motives which brought the early French settlers to California before the gold rush, they are perhaps sufficiently indicated by the occupations of Gallic residents of the province. At Los Angeles in 1841 there were a number of successful vineyard owners noted by De Mofras.<sup>24</sup> At Monterey there lived a Frenchman named Cambuston, who had founded a school there, in which project he was aided by the Mexican provincial governor, Don Juan Bautista Alvarado.<sup>25</sup> One of the prominent merchants of Monterey was a Frenchman, De Leyssègues.<sup>26</sup> Near Yerba Buena (now San Francisco), two French carpenters, Sicard and Leroy, were doing a thriving lumber business in the redwood forests.<sup>27</sup> In the village of Yerba Buena was a Frenchman named Mathurin, whose services as a pilot in the Bay of San Francisco were much in demand.<sup>28</sup> At Sonoma was M. Victor Prudon, "a very intelligent Frenchman," who conducted a school there and who was secretary to the northern military governor, Don Mariano G. Vallejo.<sup>29</sup> At New Helvetia, a Frenchman named Octave Custot was of great assistance, it is said, to Captain Sutter in the founding of the settlement.<sup>30</sup> Others might be added to the list, but these examples serve to show the diversity of activities in which the Californian French were engaged during the Mexican possession of the province, and to show their position therein.

There are, however, two other fields of activity known to Frenchmen in California, which are worthy of notice. At San Fernando was a gold mine, worked by a Frenchman named Baric, in 1841, seven years before Marshall's discovery of gold at Coloma.<sup>31</sup> And in the north were the French Canadian trappers. For a description of the latter, we are indebted to Johann A. Sutter, with whom they came most in contact. They seem to have been largely transients, for Sutter tells us that, in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, they would come down into northern California from Oregon in the autumn and spend the winter in the foothills of the Sierra, going back in the spring with their furs. They were half-breeds as a rule, says Sutter, and "came and went in large crowds," each band having as its leader an authorized agent of the Company.<sup>32</sup> The Company had a concession from Alvarado on the Sacramento River above New Helvetia,<sup>33</sup> and the Mexican authorities were therefore unable to keep the Canadians out of Northern California, though, according to Sutter, they were rather troublesome neighbors, for they purchased stolen horses from the Indians, and were in general somewhat unruly.<sup>34</sup> Sutter finally persuaded the provincial government to place an export duty on furs, which was enforced.

<sup>24</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 353.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 405.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 422.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 426.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 447.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 458.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 357.

<sup>32</sup> Sutter, Johann A., "Personal Reminiscences," MS (Dictated to Hubert Howe Bancroft in 1877, shortly before Sutter's death. Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley), 63-64.

<sup>33</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 456.

<sup>34</sup> Sutter, "Personal Reminiscences," 65.

This caused the Company to withdraw its employes from California, although some of them seem to have remained at New Helvetia in Sutter's service.<sup>35</sup> Their part in French politics in California will be noted later.

In the summer of 1841, this comment was recorded by Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Commandante General of Alta California: "There has arrived in Alta California a French gentleman of fine presence and arrogant ways, whose name is Duflot de Mofras, attaché of the French legation in Mexico."<sup>36</sup> This person has furnished much comment and controversy for Californian historians, it seems, though most of them follow the lead of Bancroft in their estimate of him. It is upon his conduct that there have been based most of the claims of French imperialistic designs upon California, and certainly much of his conduct and many of his statements would suggest such conclusions.

Eugène Duflot de Mofras was a native of Toulouse, and had seen considerable service in the French diplomatic corps in Madrid, before he was sent, in 1839, to Mexico as attaché of the legation there.<sup>37</sup> But his mission to Mexico was extended, it appears, by order of the Duc de Dalmatie, Minister of Foreign Affairs under Louis Philippe, to cover an inspection of the northwestern States of Mexico, ostensibly and perhaps sincerely for the purpose of finding out the possibilities of those regions as commercial fields for French merchants.<sup>38</sup> After spending some months travelling in Sinaloa, Sonora and Lower California, he came up the coast and arrived at Monterey in May of 1841.<sup>39</sup> From that point he traveled over the whole of California, visiting the Russians at Fort Ross, shortly before they gave up that post, and Sutter at New Helvetia, and making his headquarters for most of the summer at Yerba Buena and Monterey.<sup>40</sup> He also made a short visit to the British Fort Vancouver, in Oregon, and, late in December, 1841, went down the coast to San Diego, which place he left in January, 1842, to return to Mexico and thence to France.<sup>41</sup> The results of his travels and observations were published in a remarkably well-written and authoritative work, *Exploration du Territoire de l'Orégon, des Californies, et de la Mer Vermeille, exécuté pendant les années 1840, 1841, et 1842, par M. Duflot de Mofras, Attaché à la Légation de France à Mexico; Ouvrage publié par ordre du Roi, sous les auspices de M. le Maréchal Soult, Duc de Dalmatie, Président du Conseil, et de M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, (Paris, 1841).*<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Royce, C. C., *John Bidwell* (Chico, California, 1906), 80.

<sup>36</sup> Vallejo, *Hist. Cal., op. cit.*, IV, 244.

<sup>37</sup> Larousse, Pierre, *La Grand Dictionnaire de XIX Siècle*, XI, 374.

<sup>38</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, vii-ix, *avant-propos*: "With the special mission to visit the western provinces of Mexico, New Galicia, Colima, Sinaloa, Sonora, the gulf of Cortez, the old and new California, the Russian forts which adjoin it, the posts of the Americans and the English at Astoria, and on the extent of the River Columbia and of the Territory of Oregon; to inquire, in short, *independently of a political point of view*, what advantages might be offered to our commerce and our merchant marine, the foundation of settlements in these regions still little known to France." [The italics are mine.]

<sup>39</sup> Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, IV, 249.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 249-250.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 250.

<sup>42</sup> The work of De Mofras is highly praised by the chief Californian historians, Bancroft (IV, 253-255), and Hittell, Theodore H., *History of California* (4 v., San Francisco, 1885), II, 292-293.



It is the commonly accepted belief that De Mofras was an advance agent of the French government in its designs upon California, if not ultimately upon Mexico, and his book has been dissected with a view to exposing it as a guide book for a French army of occupation in California.<sup>43</sup> Color is given to these charges, it is claimed, by the fact that the book was published by order of the French government. But before considering these arguments, it is necessary to analyze the statements of De Mofras, and to note what observations he made in California which could be of value to a deliberately imperialistic government interested in the province.

De Mofras visited the missions of Alta California, and noted their character and population. He also studied the commerce of the province very carefully. He gave, as has already been noted, the leading citizens of French descent or sympathies in each town; and he mentions some as being very "useful."<sup>44</sup> At San José lived one Don Antonio Suñol, a Barcelonnais who had served in the French navy, who spoke French very well, and was "very devoted" to France; he could be of service to French ships arriving at San Francisco or Monterey.<sup>45</sup>

The defenses and military strength of the province were given in considerable detail. At Sonoma, Vallejo's garrison of twenty men is noted; at Yerba Buena there are six soldiers, and the Presidio is in ruins, its fort abandoned; Monterey has a garrison of forty men, its Presidio has been razed, and its fort consists of one battery of antiquated cannon; the military establishments at Santa Barbara and San Diego are in a similar condition; and the total garrisons of Alta California are estimated at 160 men.<sup>46</sup> Minutely careful directions are given for entering the harbors of California; San Francisco Bay, in particular, is given close attention, for De Mofras seems to have fully appreciated its advantages and possibilities.<sup>47</sup> He devotes several pages to a detailed description of it, for during his stay in Yerba Buena he had made many trips about the magnificent harbor in a schooner belonging to his host, and had evidently made an extensive study of its shores and currents.<sup>48</sup> He is careful to note certain islands in the Bay as important positions commanding the harbor.<sup>49</sup>

De Mofras soon became on friendly terms with several of the higher officials of Alta California, particularly with Governor Alvarado, who, according to the

<sup>43</sup> Dwinelle, *Address*, *op. cit.*, 16-18; Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, IV, 261-262; Cronise, Titus F., *The Natural Wealth of California* (San Francisco, 1868), 66-67.

<sup>44</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 426, speaking of one Mathurin, a pilot on the Bay at Yerba Buena.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 414. Suñol was sub-prefect of San José, and a personal friend of Johann A. Sutter.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 324-326, 400-401. According to De Mofras, there were no soldiers at the missions. So careful were his accounts of the fortifications as diagrammed in the atlas accompanying his book, that it is said that some United States army officers were able to retrace from one of these plans the lines of some of the fortifications at San Diego, which had been uncertain to them. (Dwinelle, *Address*, *op. cit.*, 16).

<sup>47</sup> Davis, William Heath, *Sixty Years in California* (San Francisco, 1889), 66; Dwinelle, *Address*, 11.

<sup>48</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years*, *op. cit.* 63-65. Davis says De Mofras was "a close observer of everything." See De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 430-444.

<sup>49</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 439-440.

Frenchman, made him a proposition to settle a colony of French in the interior of the province, for the purpose of introducing a Latin population into the country, as an offset to "the encroaching pretensions of the Anglo-American race."<sup>50</sup> This proposition, however, if actually suggested, was probably neither made nor received seriously, if we accept Alvarado's statement that he discerned a direct connection between the visit of Laplace in 1839 and that of De Mofras in 1841, and suspected both of being the agents of a French plan to acquire California.<sup>51</sup> But with Commandante Vallejo, military governor of the northern frontier, the relations of De Mofras were much less friendly, and Vallejo speaks of him with evident dislike.<sup>52</sup> In turn, the Frenchman complains of the dilatory conduct of Vallejo in neglecting to punish the murderers of a French carpenter, Pierre Dubosc, at Solano in 1840, and asserts that foreigners are not sufficiently protected by the Californian authorities.<sup>53</sup>

Johann A. Sutter was regarded with special favor by De Mofras, who visited New Helvetia, and was much impressed by the extent and possibilities of the establishment.<sup>54</sup> Apparently he considered New Helvetia as the possible nucleus of a French settlement in California, for he says of Sutter: "He lives in a territory which belongs scarcely in name to Mexico; he has about him, and he strives to attract, Canadians and Frenchmen."<sup>55</sup> The Frenchman seems to have spent some time at New Helvetia before returning to the coast, and "he spoke of Sutter in the highest terms."<sup>56</sup> But more will be said later of De Mofras' relation to Sutter.

Just what expectations, if any, did De Mofras hold that California might become a French possession? This involves a study of his character and conduct more than anything else, and we must consider not only the statements of the Frenchman himself, but the opinions of him held by those persons who came most into contact with him during his sojourn in California.

According to some of the expressions in De Mofras' foreword, the voyage to California and Oregon was inspired by the possibilities of an increased French commerce with China and Japan, and what he considers the imminent "cutting" of the isthmus of Panama. California, then, would be only a post in the great Pacific commercial scheme of France.<sup>57</sup> In the eyes of De Mofras, New Spain was about to fall to pieces, as an "inevitable consequence of its separation from the Mother Country."<sup>58</sup> Says he: "The destiny of this country is to be conquered, if it does not replace itself under the protection of a European mon-

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 384.

<sup>51</sup> Alvarado, *Hist. Cal., op. cit.*, IV, 174.

<sup>52</sup> Vallejo, *Hist. Cal., op. cit.*, IV, 246, 249. Vallejo (IV, 245) notes a rumor current in California, that De Mofras was a natural son of Louis Philippe, and further (IV, 247), repeats some scandal anent De Mofras' conduct at the home of an American ranch owner.

<sup>53</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 323-324, 465.

<sup>54</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years, op. cit.*, 65.

<sup>55</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 466.

<sup>56</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years*, 65.

<sup>57</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, ix-x, *avant-propos*.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 69.

archy, the only means of safety which remains to it. This means is, it seems to us, that which France should prefer."<sup>59</sup> He proceeds to point out the low political condition of Mexico, and asserts that the Californians detest Mexican rule, that there is a strong royalist sentiment among them, and that they are apprehensive of British or American domination.<sup>60</sup> The leading citizens of California are convinced, he thinks, that the presidents of Mexico, being unable to defend California, wish to sell it to England or the United States.<sup>61</sup> "All these men see themselves on the point of being delivered to a pitiless race, and the fate of our unhappy Canada, that of the Spanish Floridas and of Texas, is hardly of a nature to reassure them. It is, then, toward Catholic Europe that they turn their gaze, knowing full well that it alone can shelter them from the domination of the two powers whom they dread equally."<sup>62</sup> Yet at the same time he regards it as probable that before long the westward movement of the population of the United States will occupy California, and adds that if California must change masters, he would prefer to see it in the hands of the Americans than in those of the British.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, with regard to the pretensions of the United States, he holds that no nation dreams of dispossessing the Americans in California, with the possible exception of England.<sup>64</sup> As to French participation in the future of the Pacific world, he appears to modify the statement quoted above, by saying that the rôle of France should be that of a cultural and intellectual patron, and a peacemaker in the interests of the dependent Franco-Spanish peoples of America, and the natives of Oceania.<sup>65</sup>

These are the most open and significant expressions of De Mofras concerning the destinies of California. It remains to consider what the Californians thought of him and his possible projects. The opinions of Alvarado and Vallejo have already been noted, and we shall have occasion to refer to them again. But the statements of a man whom De Mofras knew intimately, and with whom he spent much time, would seem to be much more worthy of consideration. Such a person was William Heath Davis, the captain of a small schooner owned by Nathan Spear, one of the leading American merchants of Yerba Buena. De Mofras made his headquarters for some months at the home of Spear, and accompanied the captain on trips about the Bay.<sup>66</sup> According to Davis, "it was understood that Mofras was on a tour of general observation for the French government. During his visit here he was in correspondence with the officials at home, but it is not known that his visit had any political bearing or significance, and if he had any instructions in this direction from the government he did not disclose them."<sup>67</sup> Probably not much importance can be attached to

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 70.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 70-71.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 314.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 324.

<sup>66</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years*, 63-66.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 64-65.



this statement, save perhaps that De Mofras is represented as being in touch with his home government. Davis calls him, rather naïvely, "a kind of traveling ambassador to observe the different countries of the world," and has a vague idea that he came to California from Peru or Chile.<sup>68</sup> He speaks of him as "an educated gentleman, master of several languages besides his own, among them English, Spanish and German," and highly approves of him.<sup>69</sup>

De Mofras made a less favorable impression upon the testy Sir George Simpson, an English traveler who about this time came to California from Oregon. Just before his departure from Fort Vancouver, De Mofras had arrived at that post and had proceeded to make himself as agreeable as possible to the British officials. "He represented himself," records Simpson, "for he had no credentials, as an attaché of the French embassy in Mexico. Though this gentleman professed to be collecting information for the purpose of making a book, yet, with the exception of accompanying us to the Willamette, he scarcely went ten miles from the comfortable quarters of Fort Vancouver, while, in conversation, he was more ready to dilate on his own equestrian feats, than to hear what others might be able to tell him about the country or the people."<sup>70</sup> Simpson believed that De Mofras desired a passage overland to Canada, and says, "I imagine the coolness of his reception here has prevented his making application for that passage, and as we cannot get rid of him in any other way, he returns to California . . . as our fellow-passenger."<sup>71</sup>

In July, 1841, the United States naval expedition sent out on a voyage of exploration under Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, arrived in San Francisco Bay, and its commander was much impressed with the descriptions of De Mofras as given him by Davis.<sup>72</sup> He asked for details concerning the Frenchman's activities, and was particularly anxious to learn what hints the latter might have dropped suggestive of designs on the part of the French government with regard to San Francisco Bay and its vicinity.<sup>73</sup> This may have had some connection with the later establishment of a United States consulate in California, if Wilkes reported the Frenchman's visit.

Finally, we have as a last contemporary assertion concerning the motives of De Mofras, the statement of Alexander Forbes, later (in 1842) British vice-consul at Monterey, who, in a letter to his business partner, Eustacio Barron (September, 1845), makes the bold claim that De Mofras, as well as Dupetit-Thouars and Laplace, made open offers of French protection to the inhabitants of California if the latter would declare their independence.<sup>74</sup> But this statement,

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Simpson, Sir George, *Narrative of a Journey round the World, during the years 1841 and 1842* (2 v., London, 1847), I, 245.

<sup>71</sup> Simpson, Sir George, "Letters, 1841-1843," *American Historical Review*, XIV (1908-1909), 81. Dispatch No. II, Simpson to the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, dated Fort Vancouver, November 25, 1841, Paragraph 60.

<sup>72</sup> Davis, William Heath, "Glimpses of the Past," MS, n. d., 2 v., 127.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Smith, Justin H., *The War with Mexico* (2 v., New York, 1919), I, 523 n., citing British Foreign Office Papers, Forbes to Barron, September 5, 1845.

so far as it concerns De Mofras, seems to be utterly lacking in tangible evidence, and is therefore open to considerable doubt.

Historians and commentators have rather conflicting statements to make with regard to the purpose of De Mofras' visit to California and Oregon. Bancroft, as has been noted, connects him with French designs in general, and gives a reasonably fair estimate of his character.<sup>75</sup> But the other great Californian historian, Hittell, accepts De Mofras at the latter's own valuation, as a commissioner sent by the French government to make a "scientific exploration" of California and Oregon, presumably for commercial purposes.<sup>76</sup> The chief chronicler of the French in California, Daniel Lévy, makes a very significant contribution to the question by holding that De Mofras came for commercial purposes, but that he found California in such a state of detachment from Mexico, and so helpless herself, that he suggested to the French government the desirability of seizing the country before the United States should take possession of it, and thus absorb a possible French colony.<sup>77</sup> Less scholarly American writers are quite convinced that De Mofras was the advance agent of a French army of occupation.<sup>78</sup> The opinions of Vallejo we already know, and that he regarded De Mofras as an emissary of the French government, but judging his conclusions we must take into consideration his personal antipathy toward the Frenchman, which may have had much to do with his statements.<sup>79</sup> More recent historians in general have based their belief in French imperialism in California either upon De Mofras as judged by Bancroft, or upon other evidence connected with him.<sup>80</sup>

The truth probably lies somewhere between these various conclusions. But that of Lévy contains much matter for reflection, considering the character, eccentricities and lively imagination of De Mofras. Is it not highly probable that De Mofras was, as he claimed to be, an innocent commercial agent when sent out by the French government; and that, after seeing and being much impressed by California and its possibilities, he returned to France full of the idea of winning the country for his king? We have Davis' testimony that De Mofras was a dreamer, and that he beheld a great future for the region around San Francisco Bay.<sup>81</sup> Might he not have suggested its possibilities to the French ministry? At most, it seems very likely that De Mofras may have been sent out merely to investigate the whole of northern Mexico, and that California and

<sup>75</sup> Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, IV, 253: "From all the evidence, I conclude that Duflot de Mofras was a man of talent, but somewhat wild, bent on amusing himself, fonder of personal comforts than of study; not disposed to go far out of his way for historical information, but using intelligently such material as came into his hands; gentlemanly in manner, but not overawed by the dignity of the Californian officials; and somewhat too careless about the reputation he might leave in so distant a land."

<sup>76</sup> Hittell, *Hist. Cal.*, *op. cit.*, II, 291-293.

<sup>77</sup> Lévy, Daniel, *Les Français en Californie* (San Francisco, 1884), 7-8.

<sup>78</sup> Dwinelle, "Address," 16-17; Cronise, *Natural Wealth of California*, *op. cit.* 66-67.

<sup>79</sup> Vallejo, *Hist. Cal.*, IV, 246, 249.

<sup>80</sup> Richman, *California under Spain and Mexico, 1535-1847*, *op. cit.*, 298-299; Channing, Edward, *History of the United States* (6 v., New York, 1921), V, 566; Cleland, R. G., *A History of California: the American Period* (New York, 1922), 188n; Smith, *The War with Mexico*, *op. cit.*, I, 523n.

<sup>81</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years*, 66.

Oregon were mere incidents in his itinerary, though perhaps magnified by him in his book, out of enthusiasm for them himself, or because they seemed a sort of No Man's Land among the nations.

The relations between De Mofras and the Swiss soldier of fortune, Johann A. Sutter, deserve a special discussion, for they indicate perhaps the strongest proof of imperialistic motives behind the mission of De Mofras, and show quite well to what heights his imagination could carry him, besides throwing an interesting side-light on the strange, romantic figure of Sutter, whose story plays so important a part in the history of California.

Sutter had reached California by a circuitous route, which had led him from Switzerland to Boston and then to St. Louis, from which point he reached the Pacific by way of the Oregon Trail; thence he voyaged to the Sandwich Islands and Alaska, and finally landed in California in 1840, and was given a tract of land by Governor Alvarado.<sup>82</sup> This land lay on the upper Sacramento, and here Sutter had created a "semi-military and semi-feudal" establishment, known as New Helvetia. Alvarado made him a "representative of the government," and clothed him with judicial powers, to the extent that, in Sutter's own words, he "had power of life and death over both Indians and white people" in the surrounding region.<sup>83</sup> Nearly all people who came to California by the overland route from the States stopped at Sutter's fort and enjoyed his hospitality.<sup>84</sup> He had, as we have said, numerous French and French-Canadian employees, mostly carpenters and woodcutters.<sup>85</sup> Sutter seems to have occupied an uncertain position in California, for, although he was put on the frontier and given considerable powers by Alvarado for the purpose of keeping the Indians in check, he was popularly suspected of having designs against the Mexican régime, due to his resentment of sundry persecutions by Comandante Vallejo, who appears to have been jealous of him, if we may believe De Mofras.<sup>86</sup> But his position was so strong that no one openly attacked him.<sup>87</sup>

To Sutter's establishment came De Mofras in the evening of September 1, 1841, and remained for a month's visit.<sup>88</sup> Just what passed between the two men is quite uncertain, but we may draw some conclusions from the subsequent utterances of both. De Mofras, as previously indicated, was deeply impressed with New Helvetia, and he looked upon it as the beginning of a large settlement in the Sacramento Valley, "as he believed Sutter would induce a large immigration to that point by the numerous letters he had written home to his own country and to the United States."<sup>89</sup> According to the Frenchman, "it would be most

<sup>82</sup> Cleland, *A History of California: the Spanish Period*, *op. cit.*, 108-109.

<sup>83</sup> Sutter, "Personal Reminiscences," *op. cit.*, 50.

<sup>84</sup> Royce, *John Bidwell*, *op. cit.*, 45.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>86</sup> Bidwell, John, "California, 1841-1848," bound MS, dictated to S. S. Boynton for Hubert Howe Bancroft, 1877, Bancroft Library, University of California; De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 464.

<sup>87</sup> Bidwell, "California, 1841-1848," MS, 115.

<sup>88</sup> "Sutter-Suñol Correspondence," MS, compiled by Thomas Savage for Hubert Howe Bancroft, n. d., Bancroft Library, University of California, 10; Davis, *Sixty Years*, 65.

<sup>89</sup> Davis, *Sixty Years*, 65.



useful, for M. Sutter, to realize the desire that he has often expressed to us to have around him some French missionaries to civilize the Indian tribes which surround him."<sup>90</sup> De Mofras seems to have had some idea of using the French-Canadian trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company to build up a Franco-Swiss settlement at New Helvetia, if we may judge from a comment on the activities of the great corporation, which the Frenchman evidently feared.<sup>91</sup>

It is the subsequent conduct and utterances of Sutter, however, which seem to give us most insight into the relations between him and his French visitor. According to De Mofras, in November, 1841 (before the Frenchman had left California for Mexico), Sutter wrote a bold letter to his old enemy, Vallejo, threatening that if the latter "continued to trouble him, he would raise at his fort the French flag, and would go to Sonoma to reason with him."<sup>92</sup> If any trust can be put in this statement, surely Comandante Vallejo was justified in his suspicion of De Mofras; but after all, it is only the Frenchman's own statement, and had Sutter actually written such a letter (of which there is no proof) it is probable that Vallejo would have shown more signs of alarm.

But the document which is most incomprehensible, and which is at the same time most significant, resulting from the Sutter-De Mofras relations, is the following remarkable portion of a letter from Sutter to Jacob P. Leese, an American merchant in Sonoma, dated November 8, 1841, and couched in Sutter's own peculiar English:<sup>93</sup>

Very curious Rapports come to me from below, but the poor wretches [meaning, of course, the Californians, for whom Sutter had great contempt], don't know what they do. I explained now Mr. Spence to explain these ignorant people, what would be the consequence of the do injure me, *the first french fregate who came here will do me justice.* These people don't know me yet, but soon they will find out what I am able to do. It is to late now to drive me out of the country, the first step they do against me is that I will make a Declaration of Independence and proclaim California for a republicue independent from Mexico . . .

The whole day and night we are under arms, and you know that foreigners are very expensive, and for this trouble I will be payed when a french fregate come here . . .

This bit of evidence seems to speak for itself, and to betray something of a misunderstanding between De Mofras and Sutter, though just what that shadowy agreement was, will doubtless never be known. Apparently, the vivid imagination of De Mofras was matched by that of his genial and perhaps a bit overcredulous host. Yet there may have been a real and elaborate intrigue at the bottom of the affair. If so, it came to nothing.

In summarizing the question of French imperialism in California, it must be admitted that the evidence is very unsatisfactory and vague on which to base a suspicion of active design. It would seem that whatever hopes France had

<sup>90</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 466.

<sup>91</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 456. "If the Company sends colonists they can only be the French-Canadians engaged in its service." De Mofras seems to have feared that the Company had colonization projects of its own on the northern frontier, and to have desired to forestall it by using the French-Canadians for his own purposes.

<sup>92</sup> De Mofras, *Exploration*, I, 464.

<sup>93</sup> Vallejo, *Documentos para la Historia de California*, MS (in Bancroft Library), X, N 332. [The italics are mine.]

acquiring California, were merely incidental to her general policy toward Mexico, and if they were directed toward California in particular at all, it was only because that province seemed so remote and readily detachable. It is quite admissible that France wished to dominate Mexico in the time of Louis Philippe; but it is by no means so certain that she had any active intentions of seizing California, even though casuals like Dupetit-Thouars and Laplace might suggest protectorates to Alvarado, and Rosamel bluster in the harbor of Monterey. There seems to be no evidence, aside from the suspicions of Alvarado, that De Mofras was directly or at all connected with Laplace; and as for De Mofras himself, it appears more than likely that such constructive plans of French acquisition as were conceived by him, were produced in his own active brain after his return to France, and disseminated in the form of propaganda in his book, subsidized by the government. Our only real evidence of De Mofras' imperialistic activities while in California is the result of his visit to Sutter; no doubt on that occasion, fired by their dreams, each became self-deluded for the moment, though Sutter's conduct shows that his simple faith outlasted the departure of his French visitor.

Generally speaking, we might characterize the attitude of France toward California in these two decades, 1830-1850, as that of a receptive observer. Laplace, and perhaps Dupetit-Thouars, extended "feelers," to determine the political tendencies of the country; Rosamel made a demonstration of the power of France; and De Mofras was probably a commercial investigator, but with a lively imagination of his own, which led him to take unauthorized steps toward expanding the French sphere of interest in the New World. It thus seems very doubtful if Orleanist France was more than what may be called tentatively imperialistic in her policy toward this weakest and drowsiest and remotest of the frontier provinces of Old Mexico.

RUFUS KAY WILLYS.

# VOYAGE

## AUTOUR DU MONDE,

### PRINCIPALEMENT

A la Californie et aux Iles Sandwich,

PENDANT LES ANNEES 1826, 1827, 1828, ET 1829 :

PAR A. DUHAUT-CILLY,

CAPITAINE AU LONG-COURS, CHEVALIER DE LA LÉGION  
D'HONNEUR, MEMBRE DE L'ACADÉMIE D'INDUSTRIE  
MANUFACTURIÈRE, AGRICOLE ET COMMERCIALE  
DE PARIS.

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*Illi robur et æs triplex*

. . . . .

*Horace*

---

TOME PREMIER.

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PARIS,

Chez ARTHUS BERTRAND, LIBRAIRE, rue Hautefeuille, 25;

Saint-Servan,

Chez D. LEMARCHAND, LIBRAIRE.

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1834.



## DUHAUT-CILLY'S ACCOUNT OF CALIFORNIA IN THE YEARS 1827-28

*Translated from the French by Charles Franklin Carter\**

### TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The long period of maritime discovery, extending from Columbus's day down to the eighteenth century, was followed by a period of exploration and settlement which had its greatest activity — on the Pacific Coast north of Mexico, at least — from about the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, a loosely defined period of about one hundred years. During this epoch we are, of course, indebted mostly to the maritime nations, England, France, Spain; and of these the first two, particularly, have given us a long list of interesting and instructive narratives of voyages to various countries of the new world, that world which long remained, and which has not yet entirely ceased to be, the world of romance and mystery. To these three nations we owe the accounts, among others, of the voyages of Beechey, Costansó, Duhaut-Cilly, Kotzebue, de Mofras, du Petit-Thouars, and Vancouver, to mention only a few of those who visited, and wrote of, California and the Pacific Coast. The English and French travelers were the most prominent, and their results were the most far reaching; but of these voyagers visiting, and writing of, Mexico and California, the French easily surpass the English. This may be accounted for when we remember that the French nation, at this time, was on most friendly and, indeed, intimate relations with Spain, the royal houses of the two kingdoms being closely related, and this cordial feeling being naturally extended to the Spanish dependencies in the new world. On the other hand, England was ever more or less at odds with Spain and Mexico on the Pacific Coast, so that we owe the larger part of our knowledge of those days, particularly of the first half of the nineteenth century, to the French voyagers, Duhaut-Cilly, de Mofras, and du Petit-Thouars. Although the last named, du Petit-Thouars, is quite the most valuable of these from the historical point of view, Duhaut-Cilly is the most interesting, even entertaining, in his lively narrative<sup>1</sup> of the life and customs

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\* EDITOR'S NOTE: Lack of space unfortunately forbids the publication of the entire Duhaut-Cilly narrative, the chapters here reproduced in Mr. Carter's admirable translation including only those which concern themselves with the author's California experiences. The first seven chapters deal with the voyage to and around South America, and are therefore omitted, the opening of Chapter VIII bringing the voyagers to the California coast.

Charles Franklin Carter, translator of the narrative, is not unknown to California readers. He is the author of *The Missions of Nueva California*, San Francisco, Whitaker & Ray, 1900; *Some By-ways of California*, New York, The Grafton Press, n.d.; *Stories of the Old Missions of California*, San Francisco, Paul Elder, 1917; and *Rafael, A Story of Nueva California*, Los Angeles, The Grafton Publishing Corporation, 1923. It is to be hoped that his complete translation of the Duhaut-Cilly voyage may one day be published.

<sup>1</sup> Duhaut-Cilly, Capitaine A.: *Voyage autour du Monde, principalement à la Californie et aux Iles Sandwich, pendant les années 1826, 1827, 1828 et 1829*. 2 vols. Paris, 1834-1835.

in California at the time of his visit, from January, 1827, to September, 1828. H. H. Bancroft, the historian of the Pacific Coast, says:

His opportunities for observation were more extensive than those of any foreign visitor who had preceded him. No other navigator had visited so many of the Californian establishments. His narrative fills about three hundred pages devoted to California, and is one of the most interesting ever written on the subject. Duhaut-Cilly was an educated man, a close observer, and a good writer. Few things respecting the country or its people or its institutions escaped his notice. His relations with the Californians, and especially with the friars, were always friendly, and he has nothing but kind words for all. The treachery of his supercargo caused his commercial venture to be less profitable than the prospects had seemed to warrant.<sup>2</sup>

In all subjects, civil, ecclesiastical, domestic, relating to Mexico and California of which he treats, Duhaut-Cilly seems to be eminently fair and trustworthy in his observations and comments. It is surprising that his narrative has never been accessible in translation to English readers;<sup>3</sup> and it is with some confidence the translator offers this to those, small perhaps in number, who find any interest in the early voyages and, still more, in life in early California days.

The first cause of, and reason for, this voyage grew out of certain offers of business and financial profit made by a Frenchman, M. R....., who had accompanied King Liholiho of the Sandwich Islands to England. Rather strangely, Duhaut-Cilly never once in the whole course of his narrative mentions this man, who acted as his supercargo, by his full surname, and he remains to the end merely M. R..... In Manley Hopkins's *Hawaii*, however, we read:

When Liholiho and his suite sailed on their expedition to Great Britain, a Frenchman of very indifferent character, named Rives, had attached himself to the party by concealing himself in the vessel till she was out at sea. The king, with his easy temper, allowed the volunteer *attaché* to continue with him in London in the character of his interpreter. He was, however, after a time dismissed and he went to France, and occupied himself in schemes the base of which was the Hawaiian Islands. He projected an agricultural concern for which he required artisans; he also demanded priests for the Christianisation of the kingdom. The result was that Pope Leo XII appointed Mr. J. C. Bachelot Apostolic Prefect of the Sandwich Islands, and he sailed thence in the ship *Comet* [la Comète], accompanied by two priests and four mechanics. Rives, who had done thus much in the cause of religion, would not venture himself in the vessel with such a body of divinity, but proceeded in another, landed on the west coast of South America, and there disappears from history finally.

The *Comet* arrived at Honolulu in July, 1822, and its captain succeeded in landing the bishop, one priest,—the other having been lost over board during the voyage,—and the mechanics, without the permit necessary by Hawaiian law. Their landing was entirely opposed by the government. Kaaumanu ordered the captain to take his living freight again; whilst Boki, with a moderation which does honor to his enlightenment, entered into an explanation with the priests, showing them the serious disadvantage to a small and unprepared community of having within itself the exhibition of different doctrines. He pointed out that such a diversity might exist with impunity amongst large and enlightened nations, whilst it was unfit and dangerous for the Hawaiians, mere neophytes of the Christian faith. He stated the universal wish of the chiefs that the French should not remain on the islands.

However, there they were; and possession is nine points in ecclesiastical as well as other

<sup>2</sup> Bancroft: *Hist. of California*, Vol. III, p. 130. And in a footnote Bancroft adds: "Morineau, *Notice sur la Californie*, 151-2, says that both the Héros and the Comète brought cargoes which, besides being too large, were ill-assorted and did not sell well."

<sup>3</sup> An Italian translation of this work was published some years after the original French edition; *Viaggio intorno al Globo, principalmente alla California et alle isole Sandwich, negli anni 1826, 1827, 1828, e 1829, di A. Duhaut-Cilly*, 2 vols., Torino, 1841. This contains also the scientific notes on the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands and California of Dr. Paolo Emilio Botta, who accompanied the expedition, and whose father, Carlo Botta, translated the book into Italian.

law. No persecution was used, and the authorities at last gave the settlers permission to remain till opportunity could be found for their returning to Europe.<sup>4</sup>

This Rives, assuredly is the gentleman referred to by our author, "the mysterious and treacherous Signor R.....," as Bancroft calls him,<sup>5</sup> that historian never having been able to learn the name of this man. Duhaut-Cilly drops the subject of his unworthy fellow-countryman on leaving California, with one exception, when he feels compelled at Honolulu to exonerate himself from blame in the matter, and treats it with the silent contempt it deserves. Yet we owe to this M. R..... our sincerest thanks for one thing; had not it been for him and his underhanded proceedings, this fascinating account of life in California in earlier days would not, in all likelihood, have been given to us. For this reason we can afford to be lenient.

It is with regret the translator is obliged to confess that he is unable to give any details, other than the very few this narrative provides, of the author's life. Duhaut-Cilly appears to have lived in comparative obscurity, so far as the world is concerned, with the sole exception of this valuable picture of early days.<sup>6</sup> On the title page of his book he is described as: "Capitaine au Long-Cours, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Membre de l'Académie d'Industrie Manufacturière, Agricole et Commerciale de Paris."

It has been the translator's purpose to give a literal version of the author's text, and he has therefore adhered somewhat rigidly to the close meaning of the original, preferring to expose Duhaut-Cilly's exact thought rather than to obscure the French text in the slightest degree for the sake of any English embellishment. Duhaut-Cilly's quaint, old-fashioned spelling of proper names has been adhered to where no ambiguity would follow; in all other cases the spelling has been modified to conform to a more modern orthography. All additions by the translator, whether as footnotes or embodied in the text, are enclosed in brackets. Duhaut-Cilly's Introduction follows:

#### INTRODUCTION

In 1824, Rio-Rio,<sup>1</sup> king of the Sandwich Islands, moved by an impulse of curiosity, and also, perhaps, by some thought of interest, went to England in a whaling vessel which had put into a harbor of one of his islands. He was accompanied by his wife, his ministers Karimakou and Boki, and a Frenchman named R....., who served him as interpreter and

<sup>4</sup> Hopkins, Manley: *Hawaii*, second edition, Appleton, N. Y., 1869, pp. 220-21. They remained on the island till 1831, when they were sent to California, whither they had been invited by the prefect of the missions. They landed at San Pedro. In 1837 the two priests returned to Hawaii.

<sup>5</sup> Bancroft had access only to the Italian translation of Duhaut-Cilly's work.

<sup>6</sup> A brochure in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Duhaut-Cilly: *Retour de la Corvette l'Ariane de la Mer du Sud dans l'Océan Atlantique*, Paris, October, 1839, furnishes us with the sole information that our author was captain of the sloop Ariane in 1838-39, and took part in the blockade of Buenos Aires, under Rear-Admiral le Blanc. Du Petit-Thouars, in his *Voyage*, says he found Duhaut-Cilly commanding the *Ariane* at Valparaiso, Chile, in April, 1837. On the catalogue cards of the Library of Congress Duhaut-Cilly's name appears as Auguste Bernard du Hautcilly and is catalogued under B.

<sup>1</sup> [Rio-Rio = Liho-Liho, Kamehameha II. In the Hawaiian language k and t, l and r are generally interchangeable: t and r being used by the earlier writers.]



secretary. Arrived at London, he became an object of curiosity and ridicule. The great invited him in order to amuse themselves at his expense, and to show him off like a rare animal; reviewers took cognizance of his presence to fill their sheets with smart and laughable articles; capitalists rested on his ignorance hopes which were not realised; and the government paid, to a great extent, his expenses, with the object of profiting by the circumstance, and obtaining from him privileges and advantages for English commerce, to which the fertility of the archipelago of the Sandwich Islands might offer a fine prospect. But before any negotiations were entered upon Rio-Rio and his wife were taken ill with the small-pox and died of the malady.<sup>2</sup>

The retinue of the king, with his embalmed body and that of the queen, were sent back to the Sandwich Islands, on H. B. M. frigate, *Blonde*, and a consul was accredited there with the title of consul general of all the islands of the Pacific Ocean. M. R....., having remained in London, sought to profit by his position to his personal advantage, and spread the report that, before dying, King Rio-Rio had bestowed upon him the power to contract, in his name or in that of his successor, an exclusive treaty of commerce with any government or company which might wish to undertake this business; but although the moment was the most favorable possible, since at that time a great number of enterprises of this kind were being formed in London, and upon foundations much more foolish, he was unsuccessful in his intrigues. Thwarted in his hopes, he came to Paris where were his family, and there began anew to speak of his powers, and of the splendid profits which were to be obtained from an expedition to the Sandwich Islands, to the coast of California and that of the northwest of America. The owner of a privateer, without credit and business standing, was the first to take up this project, but as he would have been obliged to apply to others, in order to obtain the necessary funds, and as they did not wish his name to appear among their own more worthy ones, he grew disgusted on account of this hard condition, and was removed definitely and took no part in it.

The expedition which I shall relate was undertaken by the Messrs. Javal, bankers, Martin Lafitte, of Le Havre, and Jacques Lafitte,<sup>3</sup> whose love for the general good, rather than the desire to increase his own great wealth, led him to furnish the capital, in the expectation of establishing a new branch of industry and a new opening to French commerce.

A treaty in which M. R..... granted, in the name of the government of the Sandwich Islands, immense advantages to those interested, was signed at Paris, near the close of 1825. He promised, among other things, a share in the profits on the merchandise which should be exported; the improving of vast reaches of land which he said he owned in the islands; the monopoly of sandalwood which was the main source of wealth of those lands; and many other dazzling proffers. Without lending entire faith to these brilliant prospects, these gentlemen believed, nevertheless, they saw a possibility of being able to establish relations with this archipelago which might become of great importance to our commerce in general; but scarcely had they begun to put this project into execution, when a deeper knowledge of M. R.....'s character led them to fear they had too easily given themselves to a man whose conversation indicated more and more each day an imprudence and a want of capacity which was only too well proved by the sequel. Not wishing, however, to fail in engagements already made, the managers of the expedition continued their negotiations; but they decided to withdraw from him the entire administration of the project, and then it was they proposed that I take charge of it, as well as of the command of the vessel destined for it. Flattered by this mark of confidence, with a natural bent, besides, for enterprises of adventure, and heedless of the difficulties so long an absence might have, I did not hesitate to bind myself by irrevocable engagements. My instructions appointed me endowed with full power by all interested: I was to exact from M. R..... the prompt fulfillment of every clause of his treaty; I was to be watchful over his actions, and, in a word, he was to render account to me of all matters, as I held the right to take from him, at need, all coöperation.

I repaired to Bordeaux where I purchased a fine ship of 370 tons, which received the name of the *Héros*, and which I brought to Le Havre to complete her armament and to receive her cargo. The minister of marine, who seemed to take a certain interest in this expedition, had promised to furnish me with suitable instruments in order to make it serve an useful purpose in the progress of navigation; but vainly did I demand the fulfillment of this promise, and I left without obtaining anything but a special passport and a set of marine charts which I gave back on my return. Honored by so flattering a mission, I would, however, have been ready to fill it, employing zealously my little stock of knowledge; but

<sup>2</sup> [The Hawaiian queen's illness was measles which, degenerating into inflammation of the lungs, caused her death; the king died from the measles, aggravated by grief after his wife's death. Hopkins, Manley: *Hawaii*.]

<sup>3</sup> The same who, since, was secretary of state.

stripped of these means, I am bounded to the observation and description of those places I visited. I must not, however, pass over in silence the privilege given us by the government: the abatement of half the import duty on the natural products of the soil of China which the *Héros* might bring back.

## VIII

*Fish called coffre. — Illusion. — Tribulations. — Imminent danger. — Mirage. — Entrance to San Francisco. — The salvo. — The commandant's daughters. — We change our anchorage. — Visit to Mission San Francisco. — Fray Tomás. — Resolve to work in California.*

The year 1827 began under happy auspices; we were having very fine weather, and we scudded along toward San Francisco with a favorable wind. I had no difficulty in believing in the sincerity of the good wishes made to me on the morning of the first of January: for it is truly on board a ship that all are united by the same interest, at least in what concerns the dangers or the success of navigation. Each one feels that his fate is bound up in that of his companions; that he runs the same chances, the same risks, and while wishing for others a happy end, he is perhaps, animated less by philanthropic sentiments than moved by personal considerations. He seeks to read his own fate in the fate of others; who return it to him as would the surface of a lake, now smoothed by the calm of hope, more often disordered by the sudden storms of uneasiness and fear.

The 2d of January we passed in sight of Guadalupe Island, situated in 29° north latitude, and eighty leagues from the coast of California. It is five leagues long in the direction south-southwest to north-northeast, and about two leagues wide. It is very high land, particularly in the northern part where we noticed some large trees. There are no inhabitants on it; but Russians and Americans frequently establish themselves here for seal fishing. The Sandwich Islands brig we had met at San Lucas had passed several months here, collecting three thousand seal-skins.<sup>1</sup>

The 15th, during the afternoon, the sky was covered with dense clouds, and the sea swelled extraordinarily. It was almost calm, and everything proclaimed a change of wind; and indeed it tarried not in passing from north-northeast to southeast; and as we were then on the parallel of San Francisco, we steered directly for that port.

That afternoon there appeared upon the water, a short distance from the ship, which at the moment was making little headway, a whitish object resembling a big fish whose form could not be made out. We lowered a boat, and the officer in command of it, having carefully neared the animal (for it was one), struck it with a harpoon and brought it on board.

It was a coffer-fish of great size, four feet in length and about five from the extremity of the dorsal fin to that of the ventral fin. This fish, which has no tail, ends in its hind part by a flattened and fleshy continuation of the body taking the place of the tail. The skin is very hard, shagreened, and of a silver

<sup>1</sup> The seal-skin of fine quality is usually sold for two piastres at Canton.

grey. Its flesh is white and as if formed of a firm and cartilaginous substance. Parasitic worms, with a long, thin, yet strong neck, are found on its body, buried in the flesh in spite of its hardness, penetrating into it; the head of these *lernaeae* was armed with several tiny tubes assisting them, undoubtedly, in their feeding upon the substance to which they were so strongly attached.

I am going to enter into some details upon our entrance to San Francisco. I am not ignorant of the fact that this nautical account will be of very slight interest to the majority of readers; but I have already said that I was writing mainly for mariners who might find themselves some day in the same places and in the same circumstances. If Vancouver<sup>2</sup> and Roquefeuille<sup>3</sup> had had the opportunity to observe the deceptive phenomenon which caused me eight days of tribulations, I would have shunned the veritable dangers to which a mere error of vision exposed me.

At noon of the 18th we were in sight of land, and with a light breeze from the northwest, we steered so as to pass between Point Reyes and the Farallones, a group of dangerous rocks about eight miles south-southwest from this point, and which had been in sight for an hour. According to the surveys of these different points, and the observed latitude  $38^{\circ} 3'$ , our position was exactly determined, and we made our way quietly toward our goal, when, at two o'clock, a thick fog hid everything from our sight.

We continued, nevertheless, on our way, in hopes that it would lift; but at five in the afternoon it still remained in all its density, and night was coming on; we went close to the wind, and sounded frequently. At sunset we were in thirty fathoms, with a clay bottom, when the fog lifted and allowed us to see the coast which we found three miles from us. We had passed by Point Reyes, and we found it to the northwest  $\frac{1}{4}$  west, a position making us not more than eight leagues from the entrance to San Francisco. The night's darkness forced us, notwithstanding, to give up looking for it, and we tacked frequently the whole night to keep our position between the coast and the Farallones.

The morning of the 19th Point Reyes was located to the northwest, two leagues distant, and one of the Farallones southwest,  $\frac{1}{4}$  west; we were steering to the east with a very light north wind which permitted us little progress.

In spite of this slowness, we had arrived, at noon, opposite the bay of Sir Francis Drake, and were five miles from land, when we discovered suddenly, in front of us, an enormous chain of breakers, stretching from the east  $\frac{1}{4}$  southeast, to the south  $\frac{1}{4}$  southwest. Astonished at the sight of a shoal so little expected, I ordered the ship brought into the wind to draw near the land, supposing

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<sup>2</sup> [George Vancouver, born about 1758; served as midshipman in the second and third voyages of Captain Cook, 1772-75 and 1776-80. In 1791 he sailed to the Pacific to settle the trouble at Nootka, and to make a survey of the northwest coast of America from  $30^{\circ}$  latitude north, then visiting South America, returning in 1795. He wrote an account of his expedition, published in London, 1798, 2 vols. 4<sup>to</sup>; died 1798.]

<sup>3</sup> [Roquefeuil (or Roquefeuille, as Duhaut-Cilly spells it), Camille de, French naval officer; commanded the *Bordelais* in a voyage around the world, visiting California 1817-18, returned to France November, 1819.]



these reefs might be a prolongation of the Farallones; and as Vancouver and Roquefeuille indicated that, from Point Reyes both had continued along the coast for two miles to get to San Francisco, I thought we could do the same; and having approached to within the same distance, aided by the light north wind and towed by our boats, we followed the coast, parallel to it, in twelve fathoms.

The observed latitude was  $37^{\circ} 57'$ ; and being two miles from land, we ought, according to the navigators I have just cited, to locate the entrance to San Francisco about five leagues in the east  $13^{\circ}$  south. Indeed, we obtained this bearing exactly. In this position the nearest group of the Farallones should be more than three leagues in the southwest  $\frac{1}{4}$  south. What, then, were these breakers found so near us, stretching out over so great a reach, and appearing to leave only a very narrow passage between them and the coast? My reason rebelled against the testimony of my eyes. I lost myself in conjecture soon given the lie to by so incontestable authorities and predecessors. In fine, the existence of this danger was so difficult to understand, that I could explain it only in one way. It is not impossible that a great catastrophe, as an earthquake, might have, within some years, raised the bottom of this sea and formed this shoal. Folly! Inadmissible.

But seeking to avoid a danger appearing so evident, we fell insensibly into another, probably much more real. The wind had died away altogether, and a surge of formidable height was bearing us to a steep and shoreless coast, where we saw it dash itself with a frightful roar. Our four boats, well-manned, would have been inadequate to take us out again to open water against such powerful billows. So we were forced to anchor, in ten fathoms, much less than a mile from the land.

During an hour we passed in this frightful anchorage, we had time to examine the objects with which we were surrounded, and their appearance had nothing uncanny. The coast was formed of vertical rocks whose base, fortified by scattered rocks, seemed only with an effort to resist the violence of the waves lashed into torrents of foam. Above the wall of rock began the very steep slope of lofty mountains crowned with fir trees. In the narrow valleys left among them were seen, in addition, thick woods of these trees, mixed with live oaks; but all the rest was covered only with a yellowish and hardly living grass. Nothing around us told us we were only five leagues from the homes of men.

At two in the afternoon, a light breeze from the east-southeast having been felt, we were promptly under sail; but we had not gone a mile when a calm again forced us to anchor. From this second anchorage we located the lowest lands of Point Reyes, to the north  $50^{\circ}$  west, and the entrance to San Francisco, in the east  $22^{\circ}$  south. The sea had quieted down a little and the breakers were less noticeable. It is true the tide was high, and if this bar were an effect of the surge of little depth, as I had to suppose, it ought to have felt this change; but once more again, I could not conceive how none of the navigators preceding me

had spoken of these shallows which the larger number of them must have found in their passage. It would have been necessary to admit that these celebrated voyagers, forgetting their ordinary prudence, had run over eight leagues of a coast where everything tells of little depth of water, without throwing the lead.

In this condition of uncertainty, we decided to retrace our course, double the Farallones in the north, turn by them to the west, and to return at last by the south to seek for the entrance to San Francisco. This plan was not carried out, however, without great difficulty. We had to tack between a chain of shoals and the coast, in a space of three leagues, what would not, besides, merit any attention had the weather been clear and cloudless; but it was not so. During four days we remained in this passage, we were constantly wrapped in so dense a fog that we could not see a ship's length.

The day was like the night for obscurity; we saw neither sun nor stars, and we had only the lead for a guide; yet that was of use to us only on the side of the mainland; for, on nearing the Farallones, we quickly lost bottom at eighty fathoms. Several times our ears warned us of danger before our eyes were of any assistance to us to see it.

Particularly on the evening of the 21st, this dangerous condition of the atmosphere came near causing our destruction. We had had sight of land for a few minutes during the afternoon, and we had made a tack toward the Farallones, while carefully measuring the way. We were returning once more to the coast, calculating that we could safely run six miles under this way. The fog was again become so extraordinarily thick that we could scarcely distinguish the stern from the prow. We watched carefully, keeping utter silence in order that the slightest sound beyond could reach our ears. This precaution saved us from the greatest danger; for hardly had we gone four miles, when we heard and saw at the same time a kind of reef in front of the ship.

The terrible cry, "Breakers ahead!," repeated by several voices, preceded by only some seconds the order to tack; and this evolution being performed with coolness and precision, we were saved from a frightful catastrophe. But after keeping all our necessary presence of mind in this dreadful moment, nature had to reassert her rights, and each one of us was confounded on seeing the shoal almost under the stern, and hearing the noise of the waves rushing from it, three times higher than the ship.

The lead, as we tacked, found only three and a half fathoms, and it was by exceeding good fortune that the ship did not graze the bottom; had it touched a single time, even after the tacking, we should have infallibly been lost, life and property.

Although the fog had prevented our seeing anything but this bar, I supposed it was the breakers on the coast; but an effect of the current could alone have brought us so promptly to Point Reyes; and I could as well think that the same cause had made us drift upon the shoal, the object of our uncertainties. In this condition of things, I preferred to anchor than to pass the entire night exposed

to their influence; and as the lead had just given us seventeen fathoms, the anchor was let fall. We passed, notwithstanding, a cruel night in this exposed anchorage. A fresh wind was blowing from the northwest, and all remained on the bridge ready to sail away, should the anchor-chain break. It held, in spite of wind and sea, and the next morning we got under way once more.

At last we succeeded in escaping from this perilous situation, and having sailed past the Farallones, we returned to make the much more open passage, formed by the southernmost group of these rocks and the coast, to the south of San Francisco. Arrived within four leagues of this port, the fog gathered anew and shut it from us for yet two days. We were, however, out of danger, and we had at least a stretch of six leagues in every direction where soundings at regular intervals guided us well enough; besides, we could anchor if it became calm. However, we waited impatiently for the moment when the sky should become clear.

While we were lost in this fashion in a labyrinth of fog, we found ourselves for an instant very near a brig likewise seeking to enter at San Francisco. This ship was Russian, coming from Monterey, another settlement of California. The captain, who made these trips regularly and was perfectly familiar with the coast, assured me no danger existed in the spot where we believed we had seen the breakers on the 19th. But none of us had any doubt of it; and I have still difficulty in freeing myself from so perfect an illusion, notwithstanding the deep conviction I now hold of our error.

Later observations proved to me that we had been dupes of an effect of mirage. It is not within my province to give a theoretical explanation of it; I can only refer the reader to the first volume of the *Décade Égyptienne*, where M. Monge has discussed learnedly this phenomenon, and to the *Astronomie Élémentaire* of M. Biot. I shall try merely to apply the principles of these learned men to the incident with which I am concerned.

The mirage comes, it appears, because, by a momentary arrangement of the atmosphere, and contrary to the ordinary laws of gravitation, the strata of air nearest the surface of the earth are less dense than those above them. It can then be demonstrated that objects placed at a certain height may present two images, one upright by direct vision, the other reversed by reflection; and while these objects appear double, those which are lower, with regard to the horizon, cease to be visible; so that the first seem detached from the surface and as if suspended in the air.

Now it occurs sometimes that some beds or sheets of foam are dragged by the currents far from the coast, where the sea shapes them as it breaks them upon the rocks. If, in calm weather, this foam comes to be seen, at a certain distance, upon the top of the waves of a surging sea, the effect of the mirage will be, first, to double the volume of these foamy undulations, raising them in some manner above the horizon; and then lending them a swinging motion, an agitation which will give them the most perfect semblance of a sea rolling upon the reefs.

There, positively, was the cause of the terrors and the illusions which we believed would be so fatal for us. It has happened to me since, on the coast of California, to see again the same phenomenon; but, that time, it occurred in a spot we had just passed over.

The morning of the 26th we had, at last, clear weather; and as soon as it was light, we made out the entrance to San Francisco, distant about three leagues. The view agreed perfectly with Vancouver's description: the northern coast presented steep walls of rock of a violet color; and the southern coast, lower, was composed of sand-dunes mixed with large scattered rocks, some of which projected a few hundred metres into the sea, at the entrance to the channel.

We had a good breeze, and we delayed not in passing through the narrow channel leading to the great harbor of San Francisco. After passing the first point where are the rocks I have just mentioned, we reached another, more elevated, on which is built an old Spanish fort; and almost at once we found ourselves opposite a cluster of houses which all of us took for a farm; but on examining them more closely, and consulting the accounts of the navigators I have lately cited, Vancouver and Roquefeuille, I recognized the presidio. As everything was ready for anchoring, we had only to change our course, steering the ship toward the gentle curve taken by the southern shore, just beyond the fort; and at the end of a few minutes, the lead giving seventeen fathoms and a mud bottom, we let go the anchor, two hundred fathoms from the beach.

Some men on horseback rushed at once to the shore. I landed with M. R....., and we found some soldiers who offered us horses, inviting us to go to the presidio. We set out, therefore, making a long detour in order to avoid some marshes we had not noticed from the ship, and after a quarter of an hour we reached the house of the commandant, named Don Ignacio Martinez, lieutenant of infantry, who welcomed us very courteously, congratulated us on our arrival, and placed himself and all he possessed at our service; a Spanish expression absolutely of no importance.

Don Ignacio Martinez had a large family, in particular many young girls of very pleasing appearance, several of whom were already married. The husband of one of these young persons was an Englishman, named Richardson,<sup>4</sup> who appeared to me to be very well acquainted with the harbor and the outside coast. He corroborated the Russian captain's opinion upon the passage between the Farallones and Point Reyes, and assured me no danger existed at the spot. He told me also we had chosen a poor anchorage, and he offered to pilot the ship to that of Yerba Buena, situated in a bay farther inland, behind a large point which was seen a league away in the east.

During this conversation, which took place in Don Ignacio's reception room,

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<sup>4</sup> [William Antonio Richardson, English, mate on the whaler *Orion*, who left his ship at San Francisco. Governor Sola permitted him to remain on condition of teaching navigation and carpentry. In 1825 he married Maria, daughter of Commandant Ignacio Martinez. He had a boat, and acted as pilot on the bay; died 1856. *Vide*, Bancroft, H. H., *Hist. of California*, vol. V, p. 694.]



we heard a volley of seven guns, coming from the *Héros*, which I had directed to be given only when it should be calculated I had reached the presidio; for I wished to see what effect this courtesy would have upon the commandant of San Francisco.

As soon as I had told him this was intended for him, he seemed to grow a foot taller; and I noticed that several soldiers and individuals, who until that moment had remained covered, respectfully took off their hats. He gave orders at once to his daughters, to some to fetch cheese, to others *tortillas* and cakes; to these some sweet wine from Mission San Luis Rey, to those brandy from San Luis Obispo. All obeyed with an eagerness which could be translated thus: "Papa must be a very great man since they fire seven guns in his honor." Everything within was in confusion, while he sent a corporal to the fort to attempt to return at least a part of the salute; but of the seven pieces which were loaded, only three could be heard. This, none the less, cost the Mexican government two gun carriages which the commotion reduced to powder, plus Don Ignacio's excuses.

The loss of two old engines of war did not prevent us from profiting from the attentions of our pretty Californians. Their bloom, their liveliness hardly restrained by the presence of strangers, pleased us, and this frame of mind contributed not a little to make us find everything they offered us delicious. The account we had just given them of the peril we had run into so near the port, had filled them with fright; one of them, in particular, seated in front of me, had suddenly grown pale in a remarkable manner. "Do you think," I said to her, "it is buying too dearly the pleasure of eating *tortillas* made by your pretty hands?" She cast down her eyes, and her pallor withdrew before a more pronounced shade.

At last we returned to the ship with Richardson, and we found at the anchor-age the Russian brig which had just arrived.

We veered at once on our anchor chain; but before we were directly over the anchor, we saw floating on the water the anchor-stock which the force of the ebb-tide, against a stiff breeze from the west-northwest, keeping the ship cross-wise, had broken. This accident, which could have been easily repaired, did not, unhappily, stop here, for, on raising the anchor, we found it with one fluke broken off. We had lost the third anchor in one of the outside moorings, so that this new misfortune left us henceforth with only two anchors, without knowing when or how we could procure others.

We got under way, nevertheless, and proceeded slowly against a rushing current which a strong breeze could scarcely overcome. At first we went two miles to the east, going along quite near the coast; then a mile east 15° south, at the end of which we reached the creek of Yerba Buena, where we anchored, in five fathoms, bottom of soft mud, the northern point of the creek entirely covering the entrance to the haven.

The next day, while the crew were busied in raising a tent in the most con-

venient spot on the shore, and in unloading the materials for building a whaling canoe<sup>5</sup> I had taken on board at Mazatlan, we went to pay a visit to the superior of Mission San Francisco, situated two miles from Yerba Buena.

I wanted to gain some information as to what success we could promise ourselves in this part of California, in order to decide upon our further plans. Fray Tomás<sup>6</sup> was expecting us; and he came to receive us with great demonstrations of friendship: a welcome which the behaviour of this religious never, furthermore, belied in the numerous relations I had later with him.

Hardly were we seated around an oaken table, where we had *las once*,<sup>7</sup> than Fray Tomás asked me for news of Spain, in a tone betraying to me how greatly he regretted that California was no longer under the rule of that power. He was charmed, he told me, to find at last a Christian stranger with whom to converse; for all those heretics (meaning the English and Americans) open their mouths only to lie and to vomit blasphemy.

Notwithstanding this distinction, and the desire I had to tell him something satisfactory on the subject he had in mind, I could not hide from him the hardly prosperous condition his country was in when we left Europe. "But did not the French go to Spain to save Ferdinand and restore him to absolute power?" How, after that, make him understand that this claim to absolute power was actually the origin of all Spain's misery? I should have lost my time, and I was not come to California to reform the political education of this worthy missionary.

I found Mission San Francisco very different from what it was when Vancouver visited it in 1794.

At that time it consisted of a chapel and a house forming two sides of a square. Not only has this square been completed since, but a large church and a row of fairly large buildings, serving as store-houses and dependencies, have been added to it.

Beyond this solid wall of buildings, separated from it by a large court where flows a current of fine water, are the dwellings of the Indians attached to the mission. They are laid out in regular order, and cut by straight streets, made at equal distances. This establishment became, some years ago, one of the most important in California, as much from the wealth of its products as from the number of its Indians. In 1827 there remained of this wealth only the numerous houses necessitated by it, and of which the larger number were already falling into ruin.

When, in 1816, Roquefeuille visited this mission there were still seven hundred Indians; and when I arrived here there were not more than two hundred and sixty. This diminution of hands had proportionately reduced all the pro-

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<sup>5</sup> The ordinary canoes are not suitable for unloading purposes on the greater number of coasts where we were going to be found.

<sup>6</sup> [Fray Tomás Eleuterio Esténga; came to Mission San Francisco, October, 1821.]

<sup>7</sup> A light repast of cakes, cheese and drinks preceding the dinner, in order to sharpen the appetites of the guests.

ducts, and this establishment was again become one of the poorest on the whole coast. That it should be made to come to this state of decay, it wanted merely the management of two successive missionaries without talent and energy. Fray Tomás governed it after them, and under his administration it gave no promise of recovering; he was an excellent man, whose poor health made him indifferent to the handling of his business, and he willingly gave up the care of it to administrators, that he might enjoy the quietness he needed.

This worthy man gave me all the information that I asked of him concerning trade in Upper California. After a few days of calculation, I determined to profit by the advantageous prices the market offered.

But there was in this plan one quite serious inconvenience, which could be overcome only by taking a trip to Peru in the ship. The scarcity of ready money left no other means of exchange than cattle hides and tallow; and this latter article could be realized upon only at Lima, where I had known for a long time it sold well. As for the hides, it was easy to get rid of them by selling them again to the American captains who were in California in search of this commodity.

There was, even then, in the harbor a schooner belonging to that nation, engaged in this business; and we made an agreement with the supercargo of this ship, for all the hides we should gather, for which he agreed to pay us in piastres or in tallow.

This ship had sold her cargo on the west coast of Mexico, and had nothing aboard save money. But the *padres*<sup>8</sup> wished to exchange their products only for the things they needed, so that the supercargo could only with difficulty obtain the hides he was seeking. The missionaries lived in constant fear that the government might extort from them contributions in silver, as that had occurred several times, and this was for them a powerful reason for preferring merchandise to coin.

I learned also from Fray Tomás that the favorable season for buying hides and tallow did not commence until the month of May, the time when the cattle are killed to extract from them the most profit; and that while waiting, we could bargain with all the missions.

This state of things suited us all the better, as we should have had no room on board at this time to load, and as we were obliged to return to Mazatlan after a short while, to carry out the engagement made with Don Ignacio Fletes, to deliver to him the merchandise we had sold him. It was, therefore, decided that, after having treated with the missions situated on the harbor of San Francisco, we should go down the coast, visiting all the other establishments, to the port of San Diego.

The immense port of San Francisco is divided into two branches, one of which goes toward the north, the other toward the east-southeast. Each of these two inner bays measures nearly fifteen leagues in length, with a varying width of

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<sup>8</sup> This is the name generally given to the superiors of the missions (fathers).

three to twelve miles; upon all this great extent, there are several islands, the largest of which is Los Angeles [Angel Island], north of the presidio.

Missions San Rafael and San Francisco Solano are on the borders of the northern branch; they are new and of slight importance.

On the shores of the eastern branch, beside Mission San Francisco with which the reader is already acquainted, are seen those of San José and of Santa Clara, the finest and richest in this part of California. Near Santa Clara is found also the pueblo of San José, which is only a big village.

During our proceeding at San Francisco M. R..... went by land from one to the other of these missions, sold by sample the things suitable for the padres, and I sent them to him with the long boat which sometimes brought back produce. For my part, I attended to the presidio and the nearest establishments.

## IX

*The carpenters believe they are attacked by bears. — Alarm. — Soldier surprised by one of these animals. — Hunting excursion. — Earthquake. — Departure from San Francisco. — Description of the coast. — Description of Santa Cruz. — Arrival at Monterey. — The padre prefecto. — Fight between a bear and a bull. — The noose of the Californians. — Bear hunt. — Description of Monterey.*

Man easily becomes accustomed to dangers, especially if they be permanent.

Let a native of Holland arrive suddenly upon the shores of Naples at the moment when Vesuvius, suffering from one of its paroxysms, throws out its rivers of fire and pours forth its floods of ashes: he says to a Neapolitan: "How can you live in a city threatened by so near destruction? Have you forgotten the cruel fate of Pompeii and Herculaneum? Is experience, then, lost upon you? Let us flee together; I will take you to a coast where volcanoes are unknown."

The Italian, until that moment careless, replies: "I was living in ignorance of, or rather accustomedness to, the danger; you open my eyes; let us go and leave my fellow-countrymen to tread, in the dance, the fields which will be swallowed up beneath their feet."

Their ship approaches the flat shores of the Zuyder Zee. "What are those men doing, plaiting willow branches as if they were weaving a basket? They fill the meshes with clay. It is too much care and labor for supporting the earth. Let it roll down to its natural angle."

"Heavens! What are you saying?" replies the Dutchman. "Those are our dykes. It is the only defense against the entire ocean which rules us. The slightest negligence in maintaining this feeble rampart, and millions of men and these fine cities are engulphed by the waters."

"And you can sleep exposed to such a catastrophe? Adieu! I return to Naples. The lava of Vesuvius seems to me less formidable than the seas hanging above your fields; and if my native land is soon to undergo the fate of Catania,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Catania, Sicily, has been several times destroyed by earthquakes and eruptions of *Ætna* — in B. C. 121, A. D. 116, 1669 and 1693 — but each time has been rebuilt.]



the few days I shall have lived will, at least, have been passed under the most beautiful sky in the world."

If I be permitted to compare small things with great, it is in this way we grew accustomed in California to living, so to speak, among bears and rattlesnakes. But before having acquired a certain degree of confidence, we were long subject to terror, most often wanting a cause for it.

I have said that a tent had been raised on land in the place where we were building a whaling canoe. The master carpenter, with a boy who helped him in the work, slept on a swing board, hanging from the roof ten feet from the ground; and they were furnished with rifles, as much to daunt those who would have been tempted to steal some of the tools or the material, as to secure themselves against attacks from the wild animals which, we were told, were in great numbers in the near-by forests of this deserted spot.

One night, toward one in the morning, the men composing the fourth watch on board the *Héros*, heard loud growlings in the tent's neighborhood; and soon after a rifle-shot fired from that region completed their alarm. Informed of what was occurring, I quickly despatched a boat with an officer and four men well armed.

The carpenters, much frightened, related to them that three enormous bears had prowled around them for a long time, and that by the moonlight they had very easily distinguished them; that they had, however, made no movement until the instant one of those animals had put its two paws on the canvas of the tent, as if to take it by assault; that then only had they fired one shot at it; but having missed the animal, it had merely withdrawn a bit without taking to flight. The officer with his four men scoured the neighborhood about the tent, and saw nothing. But following the order I had given him, he brought on board the two carpenters who would no longer sleep on land, and preferred to bring their tools every evening.

The next day, having related this incident at the presidio, the soldiers made up a party to pass the following night in the tent to attack the bears and take them alive; and actually they gathered four of the best and most daring riders, and prepared for this hunt to which they are much accustomed; but whether our carpenters had taken for bears some of the bulls of the herds pasturing on the hills, or the fire the soldiers lighted in the tent had kept these animals at a distance, although they claimed, on the contrary, that bears are not frightened by it, they waited for them in vain, and not one appeared.

For myself, I am quite inclined to believe that the fear so dreadful an animal inspires could very easily, in the eyes of the carpenters, metamorphose a bull or a fox into another beast; and if I form an opinion of it, from the nature of the growlings which reached my ears, when I had climbed to the deck, I must think that a sudden illusion was the cause of this adventure.

Be that as it may, bears are very common in the environs; and without going farther than five or six leagues from San Francisco, they are often seen in herds,

in the forests and even in the fields. The Californians claim they seldom attack passers-by, and that, only when one happens to be near them, or arouses their savageness by teasing them, do they make use of their terrible claws and their extraordinary strength.

"But without waiting to see whether, near the dark den,  
The men fear the bears, or the bears fear the men,"

I saw at this time a soldier bearing recent and indisputable proofs that they are not always of a very peaceful disposition. Fray Tomás told me he himself had saved the man's life, when the bear had already buried its claws in his right side and in his face. By the merest chance, this religious, walking in a very solitary road, in company with several men, had heard the cries of this unfortunate man, whom his horse, motionless with fear, had not been able to save; and having quickened his step and made a good deal of noise, the savage beast had left its prey and taken to flight.

This man related that, reaching this narrow spot in the road, he had suddenly found himself face to face with the bear, two steps away; that not prepared for a fight, he had tried to escape the danger by turning back; but the animal had immediately thrown itself upon the crupper of his horse and had stopped him short.

During our sojourn at Yerba Buena, we used ordinarily for hunting the many moments of leisure left us by our business which was somewhat desultory and without consequence. The country supplied a large number of hares, of rabbits, of those tufted partridge, and particularly an astonishing variety of ducks and sea-birds. All this for our table.

As for the collection I was engaged in with Dr. Botta, our quests were not less fruitful: on the seashore a swarm of beautiful shore-birds; in the woods and on the hills, several fine species of hawk and other birds of prey; in the thickets, magpies, blackbirds, sparrows and several frugivorous birds all different from ours; finally, in the heath, a pretty species of humming-bird, perhaps the smallest existing, with a head and throat of glowing fire.

When this bewitching little creature lights upon a dry branch, for some short seconds, one would say it was a ruby spheroid, or rather a little ball of red-hot iron giving out rays of sparks. If several were found together on the same plant, the Arabian, lover of marvels, could have taken it for a branch loaded with precious stones which he dreams about, as he reads the *Thousand and One Nights*.<sup>2</sup>

One Sunday, with two officers from the ship and a guide, I went early to the mission, intending to make a hunting excursion toward a place called Rancho de San Bruno, where we should find much game. But before going farther, we attended mass and heard a sermon from Fray Tomás on God's sixth commandment.

<sup>2</sup> [Probably *Selasphorus rufus*; perhaps *Calypte anna* or *C. costae*, all common in California: the true ruby-throat, *Trochilus colubris*, is not found west of the Rockies.]

He handled his subject with talent; but I will confess that his discourse would have appeared very extraordinary to European ears accustomed to comprehend the periphrases usual in such matters; and though the good father had warned us, in his exordium, that one must not be afraid to paint without circumlocution the offences shamelessly committed, he had to remind us he was speaking to half-savage Indians, and to people almost as ignorant as they, to reconcile us to the *naïveté* of his imagery.

At last we mounted our horses and, for about three leagues, followed one side of a long valley, leaving, on the right hand and on the left, high verdant hills where the mission herds were grazing. At every moment we saw those animals I have already described under the name of coyotes: their pelt is far from being as beautiful as that of the coyotes of Lower California; their color here tends much more to a dull grey; the tail is less covered with hair, and the fur is usually thinner.

Reaching the southern end of the valley, we passed a ravine, and soon were in the plain, in the middle of which flows a brook, forming here and there little lakes. We dismounted on the edge of one of these ponds, and having tethered our horses, we went, each one by himself, to shoot the ducks of divers species, and the wild geese which we found in large numbers everywhere. Some of us killed, also, a species of heron, called in the country *grulla* [crane], considered by the people a delicate food.

After using three hours in spreading terror and death among the hardly wild hosts of the air and the water, all of us returned, with more or less success, to the spot where we had left our steeds, supplied above all with a great appetite which we satisfied by means of the food with which we had been careful to provide ourselves.

In coming back we did not follow the route we had taken in the morning: we turned to the east and went round the hills we had passed on our left. The slope of these hills is much greater on this side, which toward the harbor is almost vertical. One must have horses sure footed and well used to venturing, in this manner, into these *laderas* or narrow paths, hardly traced upon the mountain slope, and which leave frightful precipices below the rider, where the least slip would send him rolling with his horse to the edge of the steep wall of rock, and thence with one bound into the sea.

I do not know what was the nature of the feelings ruling my companions at the time; but I admit that I heartily cursed our guide, while listening to his singing of the *petenera*,<sup>3</sup> and seeing him strike the steel to light his cigarita, as if he had been in the very middle of one of our royal roads. I dared not even let my eyes wander over the immense, magnificent basin beginning at my feet; but I calculated, I believe, that the little circular waves my body would raise in falling in, would cause no more agitation on its banks than the fall of a fly into the great basin of the Tuileries.

<sup>3</sup> A Californian air.

The 4th, as we were making preparations to leave San Francisco, to go down the coast, I learned of the arrival at the mission of Padre Ramon Abila, of whom Roquefeuille speaks in his narrative. I went at once to pay a visit to this religious who, knowing I was to go to Monterey, asked passage of me which I granted with much pleasure.

All our business at San Francisco was ended, and we were quite well satisfied with the transactions we had carried out there. It was agreed with the padres that we should return in June to receive the value of the goods they had bought from us. We had now to continue the same operations with the other missions; but Santa Cruz, situated between San Francisco Bay and Monterey, was one of those where foreigners were not admitted. But by a happy circumstance, I received permission to go there. The president of that establishment had informed me that he had quite a large quantity of grain to furnish to the commandant of Monterey, who had no way of sending to fetch it by water. I wrote him that if he would permit me to anchor, on our way past Santa Cruz, I would carry it to him. Necessity pleaded my cause, and it was decided I should load on the grain.

I was only waiting, therefore, for a favorable wind to leave; but the last part of our stop at Yerba Buena was marked by continual squalls.

This bad weather had been preceded by a heavy earthquake. One night, toward four in the morning all of us were awakened by a remarkable noise, and particularly by a shaking which made us believe, at first, that the ship had just been cast upon the rocks. The vessel shivered and cracked in every part, and the chain anchoring us made a frightful noise. When we were satisfied that we had not moved it was not difficult to recognize the cause of this alarm. The duration of the sound and the shock was about eight seconds.

The next day the people at the presidio, still much frightened, told us they had passed a part of the night out of doors; that the shocks had been several times repeated and that all the houses were more or less shaken and damaged.

Fray Tomás also wrote me that the mission buildings had suffered in some parts, adding merrily: "In the church the statue of San Emilio<sup>4</sup> fell from his niche and broke an arm; but as for San Isidro el Labrador (Saint Isidore the Ploughman<sup>5</sup>), he remained firm, leaning on his spade."

The eve of our departure, I had from Don Ignacio Martinez an official letter in which he begged me, in the name of the Mexican government, to convey to San Diego three bad Indian subjects whom he was compelled to keep constantly in irons, to prevent their escaping and robbing the people at the presidio and at the missions.

It was to my advantage to maintain relations of good understanding with the agents of the government; and in spite of my dislike to assist slavery, I consented to the commandant's request. I thought, moreover, that a stay on board

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<sup>4</sup>It is Saint Æmilius who is invoked in California against earthquakes.

<sup>5</sup>[Patron saint of Madrid, where his festival, May 15, is kept.]



would be for those wretches a momentary alleviation of their situation, and I hoped that, in changing their abode and masters, they might return to milder habits.

The 7th, we set sail, and left the harbor with the help of the ebb; then a nice northwest breeze greeted us, and we went swiftly along the coast and only a little distance from it.

There are eighteen leagues from the entrance to San Francisco Bay to the roadstead at Santa Cruz, and the way is south-southeast, without turns and dangers. All day we had the spy-glasses in our hands to examine the coast, whose aspect the swift progress of the ship altered every minute. In general it is very high in the interior, and everywhere covered with forests of fir trees; it then grows lower by a gentle slope toward the shore; but before reaching it, it rises again to form a long ride of hills, whence it descends finally to the sea, now bathing the foot of vertical rocky cliffs, now gliding in sheets of foam over sandy or pebbly beaches. Beautiful verdure clothed the plains and the hills, where we constantly saw immense herds of cows, sheep, and horses. Those belonging to Santa Cruz meet those, less numerous, of San Francisco; so that this long strip of eighteen leagues is but one continual pasture.

The morning of the 8th, after some hours of calm, we anchored in eight fathoms, in Santa Cruz roads.<sup>6</sup>

I went immediately to the mission with Padre Ramon Abila, and I was cordially received by Fray Luis Taboada, its president. I informed him I was ready to receive the grain he was to deliver to me for the commandant at Monterey; and at once he gave order to his Indian *mayordomos* to get ready the carts to carry it to the shore, where they were busied in taking it on board. During this proceeding I trafficked with Fray Luis and the people in the vicinity. That was the real end of my stop, the freight of the grain being merely the pretext.

At every mission I visited I made a new friend. Hardly was I arrived at one than there grew up, between the missionary and myself, a trust, manifested at first by complaints against the government which had taken the place of the royal authority. This barrier overcome, I was made acquainted with all the harassments that this want of harmony necessarily produced. I was then told about the persons with whom I was to trade, to the minutest particular: it was in this way, above all, that I learned of the degree of solvency of each one: proofs which were of the utmost use to me, and which I have never been sorry to have listened to: thus, during the whole course of my operations in California, I had only eight hundred piastres of bad credit.

Nearly all of these religious were men of distinguished merit and great discretion: the counsels they gave me came from no motive of hatred, and they had no other aim than to serve me, like a friend, like a brother; they knew well I would not make bad use of it, and that I received it from them only as busi-

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<sup>6</sup> Survey of the anchorage: The mission buildings north 22° west. Point Año Nuevo south 45° west.

ness information. This was the result of the happiness they found in treating with a captain of their communion. Never would they have approached a like subject with an American or an Englishman. Their fine soul and their tolerance made them, truly, hospitable to all; but from simple duties of courtesy to complete indulgence of confidence, there was a world.

No situation is prettier than that of this mission. From the shore the ground rises so regularly by steps, that they might be said to be the symmetrical terraces of a fortification. I know not even if the grassy covering of an artificial work could ever equal the beauty of green sward clothing them like the carpet of green velvet spread out over the steps of a throne. The buildings are placed upon the third sward fronting the sea, and backed against a thick forest of large fir trees, which lend a new brilliance to the whiteness of their walls.

To the right of the settlement, the natural steps supporting the mass of earth are abruptly broken by a deep valley, at the bottom of which flows quietly a river of clear water, bordered with trees whose dense foliage protects its ripples from the burning heat of the sun. One would be willing to exchange his lot for that of the pretty sky-blue kingfisher which, intent upon a dry branch, spies, beneath the delightful shade, the fish which a ray of light has just betrayed, shining upon its scales of gold. One would envy the sweet life of the beautiful red-duck ambling peacefully under these balustrades of verdure, or of the white heron which here finds easy and abundant food.

There would be, truly, some offset if Dr. Botta were to renew frequently his collection of skins of Californian birds; for during the two days he passed at Santa Cruz, he threw a little confusion into the habits of these poor creatures; and I even believe I should, in justice, blame myself for a part of this cruel invasion.

The mooring-ground being protected only from the north, we were compelled, on the 9th, to set sail in great haste, at the approach of a storm from the south which threatened us. We had again to congratulate ourselves, at this time, for the energy and good will of our crew. Indeed, when the danger was seen, all our boats were on the beach, loading on grain and hides. I ordered a gun fired at once to recall them, and Dr. Botta as well, he being gone to the village to visit a sick man; the loading was taken aboard; the boats hoisted up; the two anchors raised; and in less than a half-hour we were under sail, at the moment the wind blew violently into the bay.

However good be a crew, they would not display this valuable activity were they not roused by the energy of skillful officers. The coolness and talent shown by M. Tréhouart, my mate and friend, on these occasions, established order and commanded promptness.

The storm was not, however, of long duration, and the wind quickly returned to the northwest; but none the less we kept on our way to Monterey, only seven leagues from Santa Cruz, and we anchored there at ten in the evening.

The next day, at sunrise, I saluted the place with seven guns, which were

returned by one sole shot. I went immediately after to see the commandant, Don Miguel Gonzalez, captain of artillery; and before any other business, I begged him to explain why the salute had not been returned in full. He opened a book, where he showed me that only a warship could claim to have the salute repeated shot for shot.

I made a call also upon the deputy of the customs, Don José María Herrera, that one of the administrators with whom I was to have constant relations, not only during my stop at Monterey, but also for the entire time I should be in California. He was, as it were, administrator of all the accounts and finances of the province.

He told me the Mexican laws were observed in California, and that I must, strictly speaking, unload all my freight; but that, seeing the few resources of this single port for selling an entire cargo, I might unload only what I believed I could sell, and take back afterward, without paying duty, what should remain at my departure; adding that I might follow this method at all the other ports under his jurisdiction.

Some days after, I went to Mission San Carlos, situated about five miles south from the presidio at Monterey. The road leading to it is winding, and it twists around among the hills carpeted by very verdant grass, and shaded by great fir trees and beautiful oaks. These trees are sometimes grouped so attractively they seem to have been planted by the hand of a skillful decorator: now they form avenues, rows or solid masses; now they are dense forests opening here and there, as if to allow the eye to wander over the plains of verdure, set in the midst of the woods in the most picturesque manner. In truth, the beautiful lianas of the tropics do not interlace here from one tree to another, like garlands; but the species are mingled, separated, reunited in so many ways; the soil is so clean, so fresh, so free from bushes, that nothing could add to the beauty of these hills. The forests of the torrid zone produce a more romantic effect; these here a more severe appearance.

Mission San Carlos is built upon a little bay, open to the southwest and offering neither shelter nor anchorage. It is poor and almost depopulated of Indians. Padre Ramon Abila (the sudden bad weather having prevented him from reembarking at Santa Cruz) had arrived by land. I found here also Padre Altamira, a young missionary, and Padre Sería, prefect and head of all the Franciscans of California, a man of distinguished merit and great virtue.<sup>7</sup>

At this time he was in utter disgrace among the Mexicans, for having refused to take the oath to the constitution, and prevented his subordinates from consenting to it: he was also, in a manner, held as prisoner and kept in sight at San Carlos. The agents of the Mexican government considering him, therefore, as the main obstacle to the submission of all the other missionaries, would have liked to

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<sup>7</sup> [Vicente Francisco Sarria, born 1767, near Bilbao; came to California 1809, at San Carlos, 1809-29, and at Soledad 1829-35; *comisario prefecto* 1813-19, and 1823-30, president also 1823-25; died 1835, and buried in the church at Mission San Antonio.]

send him back to Mexico. Commandant Gonzalez had already sought to sound my intentions, to learn if, on returning to Mazatlan, I would consent to take him; but I made that officer understand that, however disposed I was to do anything agreeable to his government, I would never make myself the instrument for any act of violence toward whomever it might be; and that I would not take the *padre prefecto* aboard unless he himself asked me to do so. This good missionary had feared that I might comply with the commandant's designs; and he showed me the liveliest gratitude when I disclosed to him my sentiments in this regard.

The 24th, having sold everything asked for, and having no hope of making more trade for the time, I had sent on board again everything remaining on land; but as the next day was Sunday, I put off the departure till the day following.

That day we had a spectacle new to us. The soldiers of the presidio having caught a bear alive, came to offer it to me; and I acquired it for some piastres, in order to see a fight to the finish between this animal and a bull I had also procured. Both were brought into the enclosure of the presidio, where they were tied together with a long leathern cord which, without allowing them to withdraw from each other, left them, nevertheless, all the freedom of their movements; after which they were abandoned to all their savagery.

This show took place at the conclusion of mass, and the spectators were many. When the two combatants were in the centre of the court, the bull, not paying, at first, any attention to the bear, began to run upon those surrounding him; but soon feeling himself held back by the leg, he turned quickly toward his most formidable enemy, and with the first blow from his horns, he threw him down. Unluckily the bear had had a paw broken in his first fight with the soldiers, and could not make use of his prodigious strength; but he bit the bull in the neck and made him utter loud bellowings. This attack having increased the bull's rage, he took the field anew and fell like lightning upon the wild beast which, after a few minutes, was horribly gored, and lay dead on the spot; so that the victory remained entirely with the bull; but the combat would have been doubtful, at least, had the bear been less maltreated beforehand.

Since then I have seen other fights between these animals, where luck always turned out differently. The beginning of this mortal struggle was always in the bull's favor; but when some deep bite or the fatigue from the combat forced him to thrust out his tongue, the bear never failed to seize him by this sensitive part, and to bury his terrible claws into it; not letting go his hold, whatever struggles his adversary made. The bull, conquered, reduced to bellowing frightfully, torn in every part, fell exhausted, and bled to death. In this way this savage brute becomes the terror of the herds of Upper California.

It is by means of the noose [*reata*] that the horsemen of the country succeed in overmastering the bear. This noose, used in all the Spanish possessions, of both Americas, is a leathern rope, of the thickness of the little finger, and from fifteen to twenty fathoms long. One end is firmly fastened to the saddle-bow, the other is tied in a running knot.



For all others than these clever riders, a weapon of this kind would be entirely useless: in their hands it is a powerful and formidable means. They have been seen, in several encounters, brave the spear and bayonet of regular troops. Those of the country about Buenos Ayres made themselves feared so much by the English army invading that city for a moment in 1809, that not a soldier dared to leave the entrenchments, knowing well that if he were surprised by a *caucho*,<sup>8</sup> and took bad aim in firing, his other arms would not be able to save him from a frightful death.

When one of these men desires to use his rope against a man or an animal, he holds it coiled in his hand; he goes at a gallop to within fifteen paces of his enemy, while making the fatal cord turn above his head like a sling; and at the favorable moment, he unrolls it in throwing it with so much skill, that he never fails to bind by the neck, body or legs, the individual he threatens, dragging him instantly with great cruelty over the ground, at his horse's utmost speed.

In California, three or four horsemen, armed with their ropes, look upon going to attack a bear as a pleasure party: they bait it with a dead animal and wait silently. If the bear defend itself, and wish to rush upon one of them, the instant is favorable for the others to snare it from behind. If it flee, as happens most frequently, the best mounted rider attempts to cut off its way and force it to fight. The first *lazo* catching it leaves it only enough freedom to run upon the one who snared it; but the rest come and easily throw their own over it: they stretch them in every direction, and hold it fast, while one dismounts and ties its four paws. It is placed upon a hide and dragged where it is wanted.

These animals are also destroyed in a more expeditious and less dangerous manner. Between the branches of a tree is constructed a *trapiste* (scaffolding), ten or fifteen feet above the ground, and several men are kept there armed with rifles, each one loaded with two bullets. Twenty paces from the tree is a horse, dead several days, the decay of which begins to make itself manifest. The bears, which, they say, have a very acute sense of smell, are drawn thither from a long way; and as they come, they are shot with great ease by the hunters. Padre Viader, president of Mission Santa Clara, a modest and truthful man, assured me he himself had killed a hundred in this way.

Others dig a deep pit, covered over with a strong hurdle of boughs, on which they put some flesh of the kind to allure bears; and keeping themselves below, they kill them with thrusts or rifle shots.

Thus the Californians make use of the rope for a weapon of attack; but they use it more frequently to guide herds of mules, horses and neat cattle. It is in this way they throw them down, either to kill, brand or geld them. Without the aid of this means, it would be impossible to overpower these animals, which, living in freedom in immense fields, are almost as wild as if they had no masters. It would be even very imprudent, sometimes, for us, Europeans, and poor riders, to pass on horseback through these numberless herds, without being ac-

<sup>8</sup> Name given to those inhabiting the country of La Plata.

accompanied by some of these men of the country, who can recognize from afar the most savage bulls, and who, at need, can save you from their fury by snaring and teasing them.

From the roadstead at Santa Cruz the coast descends in a curve to Monterey, where Point Pinos, jutting out for some miles toward the north-northwest, forms a small bay whose mean opening is turned to the north; so that from the ordinary anchorage at Monterey, the rocks projecting farthest from Point Pinos protect, in part, Point Año Nuevo and the mountains dominating Mission Santa Cruz, appearing in the distance seven or eight leagues away. It is this little bay which constitutes the harbor of Monterey; for a harbor is a space shut off from every wind.

But local accidents give to this spot a part of the advantages of a real harbor. The winds most to be feared on this coast are those from the south-southeast to the south-southwest, as I shall explain later; now the anchorage is fully sheltered on this side. It is almost as well protected from the most usual wind, which, almost constantly blowing from the west to the northwest, necessarily passes over Point Pinos. Thus there would be only those from the north  $\frac{1}{4}$  northwest to the north-northeast which might be hurtful, and they are very rare; so that it is enough to be passably well moored to have nothing to fear: there is no instance of a ship having been lost at Monterey since its settlement by the Spanish.

The point most easily recognized for entering at Monterey is Point Pinos, which, from afar and from all directions, appears like a hill of moderate elevation, and which, growing lower almost as rapidly toward the interior as toward the sea, assumes, at first sight, the appearance of an island. It is entirely covered with large fir trees, growing nearly to the edge of the water. Some rocks, always visible, are scattered about a mile from the west-northwest part of the point.

To enter at Monterey and to find the best anchorage most easily, this point must be made for and, after passing at a good distance the scattered rocks I have just mentioned, be gone about hard by in steering parallel to it toward the innermost point of the bay. The seaweed growing around the rocks, the farthest away of which is not less than eight fathoms, is a sure mark for keeping at the proper distance from the land: going by it at a distance of a cable's length, the best direction is followed. When arrived opposite a little hill on which are seen the remains of a fort, eleven fathoms, with a bottom of miry sand, will be found, and one can then anchor within hailing distance from the shore.

One should not expect to see a considerable city on arriving here: such an idea might deceive anyone who thought so, as to the true anchorage. The first buildings perceived on rounding Point Pinos are those of the presidio, forming a square of two hundred metres on each side, and which, having only a ground floor, look like mere long warehouses, roofed with tiles. To the right of the presidio, on a little green field, are then seen, scattered here and there, about forty



*Duboué, 1877, 1878*

*Marina, Isla de Lumbau, 1877, 1878*

*Marina, Isla de Lumbau, 1877, 1878*





quite agreeably appearing houses, also roofed with tiles and painted white on the outside. These, with as many thatched huts, compose the whole of the capital of Upper California.

Monterey has, however, increased greatly since 1794, when Vancouver anchored here on his return from the northwest coast of America: then there was only the presidio; all of the houses existing today, the larger number of which belong to foreigners, have been built only since the independence of Mexico.

Beyond these dwellings rises a line of rounded hills, of charming appearance, where one may admire a picturesque medley of various kinds of trees, among which the firs and oaks always dominate the rest.

Landing is easily accomplished near a small guard-house, in the innermost part of the creek. A stream, with but little water, flows through a small glen, to the left of the old fort. This spot is quite useful for replenishing water vessels: it would be an excellent watering-place were the spring a little more abundant; but it nearly always suffices for the needs of one or two ships.

## X

*Point Concepcion.—Santa Bárbara Channel.—Floating asphaltum.—Arrival at Santa Bárbara.—Description of the presidio.—Washerwomen.—The old padre.—Fray Antonio Ripoll.—Description of the mission.—The commandant general, Echeandia.—Difficulties of his government.—Departure.—The messenger gunshot.—The mustard and snakes.—Anniversary Island.—Sea eagles.*

Happy is the mariner having sufficient acquaintance with the places at which he disembarks, that a single glance, cast into the opening between two banks of fog, is enough for him to recognize his position, and who, thereby, reaches a safe shelter before night, instead of passing it, disquieting, frightful, at the entrance to the haven, unable to take refuge in it! Still more happy he who, in the midst of a storm, can profit by the instantaneous flash of lightning, to make out a rounded hill-top, the pale face of a well-known bluff, or the steep profile of a cape! In less than a half-second his trained eye has seized the form of these objects; he orders the helmsman to turn the tiller to the wind: immediately a sudden breeze fills the large trapezia of his topsails; the ship flies forward, and the waves which were breaking on her sides no longer permit anything but a loud murmur to be heard in the wake. A headland is left to starboard; to port, a small island; the sea still roars in the distance; but gradually it grows smooth, and very soon the lights showing in the windows of the buildings become so many beacons guiding the ship to the mooring ground.

One should, therefore, study the appearance of the coasts as an essential part of the knowledge a sailor must strive to acquire wherever he find himself; this sort of observations has, accordingly, always been the object of diligent attention on the part of navigators who have done the most for the safety of navigation. I know how jejune is this science for the majority of readers; but it is too intimately bound up with the purpose of this book to neglect to insert in it, on every occasion, the result of my observations.

The place we were to visit immediately after Monterey was Santa Bárbara, distant about sixty-five leagues to the southeast. Between these two points are several missions; among others, that very rich one, San Luis Obispo, having quite a good anchorage in its proximity: it would have been very profitable for us to stop there; but this establishment was not in the list of ports open to foreigners. It was, therefore, for Santa Bárbara that we set sail on the morning of the 27th.

The 28th, we saw at the same time the islands forming the channel, called Santa Bárbara, and Point Concepcion. This point, beyond which the coast takes an easterly direction, is very remarkable from its form. Appearing like a wedge, it rises from the sea; then falling toward the interior, after describing a long trail, it ascends again gently to the tops of the mountains.

As soon as we had passed this cape, the sea, before very much disquieted, became fair and smooth; but the breeze was light, and we advanced but slowly, having on our right the islands of San Miguel, Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz.

The coast, along which we continued at a distance of two miles, is dominated by a chain of mountains parallel to the shore, and from six to seven hundred metres in elevation. At their base stretches a plain ending in vertical walls of rock, leaving between them and the sea a narrow beach of sand and pebbles. This flat country, where graze large herds of horses and cattle, is agreeably cut, at almost equal distances, by narrow valleys. In these ravines grow thick clusters of beautiful oaks, whose crowded bushy tops seem to bring to the same level all this ground: streams run through these valleys and serve to furnish water to the cattle feeding all about here.

From the sea, at certain hours of the day, these animals may be seen to leave the pasture land, meander in long files to betake themselves whither thirst leads them, and to go back again in the same order, walking slowly, to the fields where plenty and rest await them. But some horsemen come from time to time to disturb this happy idleness. Then all flee to avoid the unlucky *lazo*. Vain efforts! Woe to that one which the Californian has destined for the bridle or the knife; he cannot escape slavery or death.

In freedom the horse does not know how to make use of his swiftness; he rushes away blindly; and when he believes he is far from the danger, he often only makes a circuit which brings him back to it: while, guided by an intelligent rider, his side bleeding from the large spur, the charger, conquered, profits by all the advantages of the land, and gains it by a shortened route.

The bull also, better armed, but less swift, in vain turns back toward the one pursuing him: at the instant when, rushing upon one of his enemies, he thinks to pierce him with his horns, another snares him from behind and he is bound fast without pity.

The naked mountain sides, burned and of a violet color, lend a new charm of contrast to these beautiful places, to which are wanting only some pretty villas to make a magnificent picture: but California is still far from the time when a

ger and wealthier population shall adorn it with those fine buildings. However that be, all this slope, of fields and groves mingled, is one of the most smiling on the entire coast.

While we went along by this shore, we found the sea almost everywhere covered with asphaltum, now in the form of round flat slabs of some thickness, now that of large sheets of oil and tar, spread over the water and displaying yellow or blue reflections. The odor exhaled by this stuff was powerful enough to be annoying, and make breathing troublesome and difficult. I knew not for some time whether this natural pitch, spread over the entire channel in such great quantity, flowed from some point on the coast, or its source gushed up from the bottom of the sea: it was only on another stop at Santa Bárbara that I learned that half-way from this presidio to Point Concepcion, between the rancho de los Ortigas and that of Los Dos Pueblos, there is a large pond of asphaltum boiling unceasingly, and whose excess overflows into the sea from which this spring is not far distant.

The evening of the 29th, we anchored in the roadstead of Santa Bárbara, in the midst of a fog which had granted us but a very imperfect examination of the neighborhood of the mooring ground; but the morning of the 30th we had a complete view of the place where we had cast anchor. The same appearance of the land continued toward the east as far as the eye could reach; only the wall of rocks was broken to form the very little reentering bay of Santa Bárbara; and the mountain chain, a little lower here, was cut by a deep gorge. The roadstead, exposed to half of the horizon, is sheltered only from the west to the east by the north. Opposite this place, four leagues away, appears the lofty and quite large island of Santa Cruz, and to the left of this, the Anacapa (Indian name) group, composed of four small islands.

I landed with M. R....., and we went to see the commandant, Don José Noriega.<sup>1</sup> He dwelt in the presidio, while waiting for the completion of quite a new house he was having built without, and for which I was bringing him some beams I had taken on board at Monterey. In Don José we found a well-informed and estimable man, surrounded by a large and charming family, from whom we had a gracious and hearty reception. His large fortune and fine character were the cause of his enjoying a great influence in the country; and although he was a Spaniard, he had just been nominated delegate to the Mexican congress.

The Santa Bárbara presidio, like that at Monterey, is a square enclosure surrounded with one-storied houses and dependencies; near the northwest corner is a building, distinguished somewhat from the others, and surmounted by a balcony: this is the commandant's dwelling. At the opposite corner, turned toward the shore road, appears what the Californian engineers intended to be a bastion; but one would have to be gifted with great good nature to say they have succeeded. The presidio is built upon a plain lying between two small glens where flow two little streams. Around the fortress are grouped, without order,

<sup>1</sup> [José de la Guerra y Noriega.]

sixty to eighty houses, inhabited by the *gente de razon* and the Indians working as servants to these rational people. Each one of these dwellings has a little garden surrounded with palisades.

We went finally on foot to the mission, situated at the upper end of the plain a half-league from the presidio. The road leading to it ascends very slightly as it crosses a beautiful grassy meadow, where graze the horses used at the presidio and the cows supplying it with the daily milk. As we went on, the mission buildings presented a finer appearance. From the roadstead, we could have taken it for a mediæval castle, with its lofty openings and belfry; approaching nearer, the building grows, and while losing none of its beauty, assumes little by little a religious aspect; the turret becomes a bell-tower; the bell, instead of announcing the arrival of a knight, rings for service or the angelus; the first illusion is destroyed, and the castle becomes a convent.

In front of the building, in the middle of a large square, is a playing fountain, whose workmanship, quite imperfect as it was, surprised us the more, the less we expected to find in this country, so far from European refinement, that kind of luxury reserved with us for the dwellings of the wealthiest. After rising to a height of more than eight feet above the ground, the clear and sparkling water of this fountain fell again in broad sheets upon a descending series of stone basins forming altogether an octagonal pyramid; it filled a reservoir of the same shape to the brim, whence, issuing from the jaws of a bear, also in stone, it fell into a fine laver in stucco, around which some Indian women and Californian girls were busy washing. The latter looked at us from below through the beautiful tresses of their chestnut hair, and I presume the examination they made of two strangers was as perfect as it was swift.

In all countries the fair sex alone possess this gift of estimating an individual, and particularly of seizing upon his oddities in a trice with a stealthy look. I saw one of these young girls smile almost imperceptibly; perhaps I myself was the cause of her mischievous mirth; but the rather grotesque appearance of my companion, his teeth calcined by the immoderate use of tobacco, and his simian head, on a slender body of four feet eight inches: all this should have quieted my self-love a little.

We went up a flight of several steps leading us to a long peristyle or cloister, supported by fifteen square pillars forming fourteen arches which, from a distance, give the mission that noble appearance which surprised us at the first sight of it. A feeble old padre was sitting here, his age and condition making him so insensible to all taking place about him, that scarcely did he see we were strangers, when we bowed to him, and asked after his health. I saw easily that, to arouse his attention, it was necessary to take strong measures: I leaned toward him, and spoke loudly enough to overcome his deafness: "I am a Frenchman; I come from Paris, and I can give you quite recent news from Spain."

Never did a talisman produce a more magical effect than these few words, whose virtue I had already proved for drawing to myself the kindness and inter-



est of these good fathers. The Spanish, in general, are extremely attached to their country: they love the ground, the customs, everything, even the errors of their government. I had no sooner pronounced these words than the old man, emerging from his lethargy, loaded me with compliments and such urgent questions, that I could not find an instant to reply to him. He recovered part of his past vigor, while speaking of his native land which he was to see no more.

The events, opening the way to the invasion of Spain by a French army, were known to him: he considered Fernando VII as a quasi-martyr, and the French as his liberators. Opinion and education often cause the same things to be looked at under very different aspects: while this poor religious rejoiced to learn that our troops were still in the peninsula, I could not prevent a painful remembrance from seizing upon my mind; and I recollected how impatiently we lately bore the presence of foreigners, and with what ill humor we counted the days still to pass before their departure, whatever might be the indebtedness certain persons believed we owed them. Very seldom, most seldom, is the aim or result of an invasion the welfare of the country occupied.

This old man was not the head of the mission; he filled no office, and was only supported here until God should bring his semi-existence to an end. It was entrusted to the direction of Fray Antonio Ripoll: the latter was engaged at the moment, and we took advantage of his absence to visit his garden which we found large, well planted and kept up. The paths, laid out methodically, were shaded by fine olive trees, and we saw there at the same time the fruits of temperate climes and of the torrid zone. Banana trees spread their broad leaves between apple and pear trees; and with the ruby of the cherries were mingled the golden apples of the orange trees.

With more discretion and discernment Fray Antonio Ripoll, a man of good countenance and distinguished mind, put to me some of the questions already asked of me by his aged companion; and when I had satisfied his curiosity, or rather his anxiety, he proposed to us an inspection of the mission buildings and the church.

The façade of this chapel is ornamented with six half-columns supporting a triangular front, bearing several statues of saints. The body of the church consists only of a nave with low arched roof, without side aisles. The construction of this edifice would have been nothing to excite surprise, had it been built by Europeans; but if one consider that it is the work of poor Indians, guided by an ecclesiastic; that it is erected in a country which, though it contain all the materials required, at least supplies them to the hand using them only in the rough state in which nature produces them; one cannot tire in admiration of the patience of this religious, the talent he has shown, and the care he must have taken for such a building.

With us, does one wish to undertake the erection of a building of this kind? Ten architects, with their plans and estimates, present themselves for it. One has merely to select the one most suitable; purchases are made from the furnish-

ers; all the materials, ready to be put in place, are brought to the designated spot, without any one having to be concerned about a single thing other than to prove their quality and give them the finishing touch; lastly, the best workmen contend for the choice over their rivals.

Here, on the contrary, everything is in the rough, even to the men, and the first care of the builder has been to form his workmen. Out of the mere earth he has had to make bricks and tiles; to cut immense trees far away, and to bring them, by physical strength, over roads marked out expressly across ravines and precipices; to gather, at great expense, on the seashore, shells to make into lime; finally, everything, to the most trifling, connected with this edifice has cost preliminary labors, which must have increased the difficulty very much. One is, at the same time, astonished at the boldness of the plan and the perseverance in its execution: only a boundless zeal for the spread of religion can have made Padre Ripoll conqueror over so many obstacles. He has not, however, employed much more time for completing the building than would have been necessary in Spain: this church was begun in 1820, and finished in 1824.<sup>2</sup>

The nave, the altar, and the vestry are decorated with paintings the best ones of which came from Mexico; the rest are from the hand of the Indians themselves. The pillars, frieze, framings and bases are marbled with a good deal of taste and decorated with arabesques passably executed. What heightens still more all this mass, and inclines one to be indulgent with regard to defects of architecture, is an excessive neatness, not found in our churches of the third, and even of the second, order.

Fray Antonio's talent and solicitude have not been concentrated exclusively upon the building of his church: at the same time that he gave himself to this beautiful work, he was thinking also of feeding and clothing his Indians. We went to visit his woolen shops. There, in the buildings given up to this employment, two hundred Indians of both sexes were busy at various kinds of labor: the women and children carded and spun the wool; the men planned and wove blankets, linsey-woolsey and, in particular, a coarse flannel resembling cloth before fulling. The establishing of various trades and machines had also been directed by the padre and executed by his Indians, out of whom he had made carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, workmen, in fine, of all kinds essential for an establishment as large as this.

The project completely engrossing him at this time was a water-mill he was having built at the foot of a hill to the right of the mission. The water, brought for more than two leagues by a canal following the side of the mountains, was to fall from a height of about twenty feet upon the buckets of a wheel. The fall of this motive power was not vertical: it worked at an angle of about 35 degrees; the wheel also, instead of being vertical, was horizontal; it was a full circle, upon whose plane were arranged, like spokes, a sort of large, slightly

<sup>2</sup> [Duhaut-Cilly errs here. This church, the one now standing and in use at Mission Santa Bárbara, was begun in 1816, and finished in 1820. It replaced the church too badly damaged by the great earthquake of 1812 to be restored.]

concave spoons, which were to receive, one after another, the impulse and transmit the movement.

At first glance I was surprised that the padre, a man of judgment, should have preferred to have the fall inclined, when it was so easy for him, in cutting a hill to a steeper slope, to make it much more powerful; for without being a hydrostatician, I readily perceived that his motive power lost the more of its force, the farther was it inclined from the vertical. But before expressing my opinion, reflection brought me back to the inventor's idea; and I believed I saw that whatever motive power he lost at first, he gained it from another side, in avoiding the friction from two sets of cog-wheels, since the turning grindstone would be fixed upon the axle of the wheel.

Another objection also can be made, in regard to the speed of rotation; for in this plan it is the same for both wheel and grindstone, while in our ordinary combination, the speed of the grindstone increases in the relation of the radius of the wheel to the radius of the axle-hub. Besides, Fray Antonio's workmen being little skilled in mechanics, he avoided many imperfections by simplifying the machinery, and I had no doubt of the complete success of his undertaking. I brought to his attention, however, the fact that the quality of the stone he used for his grindstones, being made from the same stone, was not suitable; because being entirely composed of almost homogeneous parts, and of equal hardness, it would grow smooth too quickly. After dinner the president went to take his siesta, and we returned to the ship.<sup>3</sup>

While we were transacting our business with the padres of the missions of Santa Bárbara, Purísima and Santa Inés, it was learned that the general had just arrived at Mission San Buenaventura, distant seven to eight leagues from Santa Bárbara. At once all was in an uproar at the presidio, and a cavalry escort was sent to meet him.

Don Jose Maria Echeandía was simply colonel of artillery; but as he had the title and authority of commandant general, civil and military chief of the two Californias (*comandante general, jefe político y militar de ambas Californias*), he was given that of general in the country; and in addressing him, that of Your Lordship (*Usta*). He enjoyed the most extensive power, and he frequently made ill use of it. The frame of mind in which he had found the Californians was well adapted to give him ideas of despotism which he had not, perhaps, brought from Mexico. Again, every one reared in Spanish habits and forms, they loved the powers of the time, and to justify their regards, they

<sup>3</sup> Carrying out the command I had given, the latitude of the roads had been carefully taken, and the mean of the observations had given 34° 24' 10" latitude north. A series of azimuths had furnished 13° 3' of variation east. The anchorage, in nine fathoms, sandy and muddy bottom, gave the following surveys:

The presidio by the mission	north 45° west.
Anacapa Island	north 40° east.
The western point of the bay	north 62° west.
The eastern end of the land	south 85° east.

The ship, in this position, was a mile from land, and very near the line of seaweed growing in this roadstead, for seven to eight fathoms.

willingly granted to them exaggerated qualifications: like the sculptor in the fable, they adored the work of their hands.

We can understand that, with such people, it would have been difficult not to yield to the sweet attraction of power. Of what use could be the assemblies held every year, under the denomination of provincial assemblies (*ayuntamientos de provincia*)? Every member, to the number of twenty, was elected under the influence of authority; and they assembled only to applaud every opinion of the civil and military chief, of which the larger number were against the interest of California. I have sometimes been present, in making claims, at these sessions, and I knew the manner of action. The general made a proposition which he frequently supported with the most specious motive. If some one tried to take the floor, he cut him short by taking it again himself, and he was verbose. If, at the moment of voting, he saw the slightest hesitation in any member of the council, a threatening look fixed this irresolution; and the vote in the negative, metamorphosed at the instant, became a vote of adherence. For prestige only, one or two of his confidants provided the comedy of an opposition agreed upon which, after some arguments very easy to destroy, always left him the honor of the victory.

We must admit also, that the position of this officer was vexatious enough. On one side, the Mexican government held strictly to the execution of the articles of the constitution, and to the laws of its severe customs tariff; on the other, it gave no assistance, in money or equipment, to the commandant general. The latter, in order to provide for the expenses of his soldiers and of his administration, saw himself compelled to violate a part of the orders he received relating to trade with foreign ships. The duties they paid being almost his sole resource, he mitigated, so far as he could, the rigor of the Mexican laws; in fact, the result would have been to make them withdraw without hope of their return, had he subjected them to a system which, already so difficult in Mexico, would have been impracticable in California. To the censures constantly addressed to him by his government, he replied with very true remarks upon the difficulty of his position: the slowness of the correspondence rendered these questions of administration interminable, and during this time things remained *in statu quo*.

The second resource of the commandant general consisted in the contributions of food furnished him by the missions for the support of his soldiers. At all times, these establishments had provided in this way for the maintenance of the garrisons; but under the Spanish government, the missionaries regarded this aid in another way than under the Mexican constitution. The padres could reckon little, truly, upon the reimbursement of these advances made to Spain: however, they made of it a duty, and, in addition, their interest was joined to it. At that time no one disputed their claim to the property of the missions; and they were aware that, in refusing these subsidies, they would be exposed to abandonment to the mercy of the Indians. Today it was no longer so: they knew that the government, considering the missions as the property of the



public, regarded the missionaries only as farmers; and that, were they still kept at the head of these establishments, it is because they alone could administer and maintain them; for they were told that some Mexican monks, of their order, but devoted to the cause of the independence, were gradually to replace them, as age and infirmity should make them unable to perform their duties.

This knowledge of the government's designs, in regard to the Spanish religious, was beginning to create in them a great indifference to the prosperity of the missions; they showed their aversion by their unwillingness to furnish to the troops the food which they needed.

The commandant general, nevertheless, preferred to act with mildness in the matter, and he succeeded better in this way than with measures of severity, which would have infallibly broken the bonds still existing between him and the padres. A violent rupture would have produced the most calamitous results in California. Indeed, the missionaries, forced to extremities, had merely to grant liberty to the Indians, and in an instant the missions would have been deserted and given up to the flames; these people would have returned to their savage life, and Mexico would have lost this province; for the creole population, too lazy and too proud to devote themselves to agriculture, would have become utterly wretched. They live only by means of the Indians who work for them.

But these difficulties were not the only ones encountered by the administration of Commandante Echeandía. I have grounds for believing that his powers were very broad, and that, in certain cases even, discretionary: but one personage aspired to withdraw from his control; this was the deputy at Monterey of whom I have already spoken. The sensitive rivalry we frequently see existing with us between different administrations and the military authorities, ruled here in all its power, and with the more inconvenience that no supreme jurisdiction could bring them into harmony upon the spot.

The government clerk, by whose hands are collected the duties and taxes, never supplied all the funds demanded: the Pactolus of his strong box flowed only drop by drop; and if the man of the sword wished to cast an indiscreet eye upon the accounts of the man of the pen, the latter, redder and more puffed up than an angry turkey, refused, saying he owed his accounts only to the government at Mexico. I shall not act as judge between these two rivals; but, I repeat it, I presume the commandant general was, in this particular, within his power; were it not so, he would not have suspended the deputy from his office, as he did later.

Admirably situated to see all these intrigues, I had early taken neutrality for my rule of conduct. I saw and received all parties alike: that was the rôle suitable for a foreign trader. My relations were, however, more frequent with the missionaries and the deputy than with the commandant general and his adherents: each one told me his secrets to which I listened most frequently without giving my own opinion, unless it was with the padres; and in this way I lost nothing of the few means for trade I was able to find in the country.

Early on the 5th, we learned that the commandant general was on the way; and at noon, we began to make out, far off on the beach which the road from San Buenaventura follows, the large cavalcade accompanying him. An hour later, he entered the presidio to the sound of a salute of seven shots from a field gun, and the same number I had fired from the ship, in conformity to Don José Noriega's invitation. I went immediately to pay him my customary visit, and I easily gained permission to unload at San Diego the merchandise I wished to leave there before returning to Mazatlan.

The 8th, Palm Sunday, I settled my accounts with the deputy's substitute, and paid him the import duties upon what I had sold at Santa Bárbara. I then went to the mission to take leave of Fray Antonio, of the commandant general and of Don José Noriega. I attended the ceremony for the day, which took place with extraordinary pomp. Branches of palm leaves, elegantly decorated with flowers and braids from the leaf itself, were distributed among all the *gente de razon*; the Indians had simple olive branches. The severity of Lent did not permit the padre to let us hear his music in the church. His Indians executed merely some chants with much taste and sweet melody: they made us hear Spanish and Latin words to the prettiest Italian airs.

After mass we returned to the padre's reception-room, and the musicians gave a serenade to the commandant general. There were a large number of musicians, and all in uniform: although they executed tolerably some French and Italian *morceaux*, I noticed they had succeeded better in the chants. At last I returned to the ship, and we set sail immediately.

We set our course for the bay at San Pedro, which does duty for Mission San Fernando, the pueblo of Los Angeles, and Mission San Gabriel, one of the richest in California. This roadstead is twenty-six leagues southeast from that we were leaving.

We steered our way so as to pass between Anacapa Islands and Point Conversion, which forms the eastern end of the Santa Bárbara Channel. Before reaching this point, we passed in front of Mission San Buenaventura. This establishment is a poor one, and the anchorage there is bad; so we did not stop. Before Point Conversion the mountains retire toward the interior, and all the land bordering the coast is low: the water's edge is sown with rocks, making dangerous a near approach to it; it is well to give it a wide berth, especially during the night.

The bay at San Pedro, whose opening is turned toward the south, forms three sides of a square, and is sheltered, to the west, by Point San Vicente. About six leagues opposite is Santa Catalina Island. On the morning of the 9th we caught sight of Point San Vicente which, coming from the west, may be taken for an island of moderate elevation, until, on nearing it, the low lands

joining it to the mountains of the interior are revealed: we coasted along it a half-mile away, and we cast anchor in seven fathoms, sandy bottom.<sup>4</sup>

The cove at San Pedro is entirely deserted. The nearest dwelling is a rancho one sees four leagues away on the road to the pueblo of Los Angeles. Several days might pass before any information of a ship coming to this roadstead would be had at the pueblo: a man may be sent to walk to the rancho to ask for horses; but more usually a gun is fired in order to have it heard there. In the evening calm, in particular, the sound reverberates easily as far as there, and even to the pueblo. We used this means with success, at sunset; and as we did not yet know the reach of our eight-inch guns, we loaded two of them with a ball, with the double intention of ascertaining their power and making the report louder. The detonation was first heard upon the rocky walls of the bay; it then crossed the plain stretching toward the north, while rolling like distant thunder; and at the instant this murmur ceased to be distinct, the echo from the mountains sent back to us, from a distance of nearly ten leagues, a gun shot, feeble, but clear and distinct, as if this salute had been returned to us by the inhabitants of Los Angeles. We calculated that the ball had traveled four hundred and fifty fathoms: it did not reach the land.

The morning of the following day, some men appeared upon the point with a number of horses which they had brought. I was little inclined to leave the ship on a roadstead made dangerous by the season we were still in; consequently it was agreed that M. R..... should go alone to Mission San Gabriel; and that, on his advice, I would send him the things he would sell there. Everything arranged in this way, we landed, and he set out accompanied by a guide.

One of my officers and I had brought our rifles, intending to hunt; but we were deprived of this relaxation, the only one we could expect in this desert, by unlooked-for obstacles. What, at a certain distance, had appeared to us like a beautiful carpet of grass, mixed with heath, was found to be a thick vegetation of mustard, already reaching above a man's head. We wished, however, to go on, that we might at least gain a rise of ground where it appeared less thick; we plunged into this veritable forest, and soon repented having done so. At every step we heard among the dried stalks of the past year, covering those of the present, the noise of the rattle-snakes crawling about in so great numbers that a novice, accompanying us, killed two in a quarter of an hour.

Vainly we walked carefully and in silence: the noise we made in crushing these old plants was mingled, in our imagination, with that we feared to hear. The thickness of this natural plantation did not allow us to see the ground,

<sup>4</sup> Survey of the anchorage at San Pedro:

The western point of the bay  
The eastern point of Santa Catalina  
Anniversary Island  
An old store-house on the steep wall of rock

south 49° west.  
south 9° east.  
north 13° west.  
north 69° west.

covered with several layers of this detritus, which cracked and yielded under our feet. We feared at each instant we should step upon the tail of one of those dangerous reptiles; and an involuntary shudder shook us, as we thought that its head, on rising, would be at least on a level with ours.

Oh! Lemaout!<sup>5</sup> alone among apothecaries, you who have known how to compound something appetizing! We should never, perhaps, have tasted of your German mustard, had you been obliged to harvest the precious seeds in the plains of San Pedro, and had California been at your door.

At last we reached a higher hill, where we found nothing more than a rare plant and some bushes. Here we shot some rabbits and a species of owl which makes its nest upon the ground and lives in families. After passing some moments on these heights, whence is seen a vast horizon, we prepared to return to the shore, and we followed, in order to reach it, the way our tracks had already traced in the mustard.

Before regaining the ship, we went to visit a small island, to which we had allowed ourselves to give, on our arrival, the name of Anniversary Island. When upon coming to the bay at San Pedro, we had noticed this rock which had no name, it was just a year since we had left France. We found upon its topmost point a sea-eagle's eyrie, with two eaglets lying in the midst of some disgusting remains of fish. The parent birds came hovering about us, as if to defend them. We had no intention of bereaving them of their repulsive family: but a few rifle shots, of which the load, of small shot, rained upon their thick plumage, without doing them great harm, freed us from their scoldings. These powerful birds were black; the under part of the tail and the top of the head were a yellowish white.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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<sup>5</sup> [Jean Emmanuel Marie le Maout, or Lemaout, French botanist, born 1799; published various works on botany; died 1877.]



## AN IRISHMAN IN THE GOLD RUSH

THE JOURNAL OF THOMAS KERR

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE PASSAGE FROM SAN FRANCISCO  
TO ELIZA

From what I have already stated in each days Journal I have scarcely left room to say more; But to save trouble of going over each days writing I think it well to give a detailed account of the passage At 12 oc on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May [1850] We Mills & I sailed in the schooner Victoria of San Francisco 80 Tons. Capt. Charles Allan Comd<sup>r</sup> The Mate Mr Harrass: & 2 sailors formed the crew the passangers were 6 China men, M<sup>r</sup> Guitaris' [Gutierrez'] Brother & his frend M<sup>r</sup> Rosa<sup>15</sup> they with Mills & I were Cabin passangers; Well had a nice Breeze leaving the Bay & got as far as a little Town called Banicea situated 30 mils from San Francisco on the left hand side of river, as it was dark when we got there I can not give an opinion about the town Next day we got on well and passed by the Town of New York Built on the mouth of the River San Juaquin leading off to Stockton & the Southern Mines We kept on the Sacramento river this [New York of the Pacific] is a wretched looking town & I think will never come to any great note being only a few houses and two or 3 schooners lying at anchor, its Built on very low swanpy ground, up to this I may say that the land along the Banks is not of much value being of a barren nature but from that to Eliza it seemed to improve and some beautiful spots we passed that I should like very much to settle in for a time the river is so beautifully wooded We passed some nice rising little towns Sacramento City appears to be a business town but like many of the others by the banks too low and marshy of all the rivers I ever saw this one and even the most crooked It would be imaginable to form any idea of it, the slough was a most Dam-n-ble place we were nearly eaten up alive by Muskeatos at it, and this place is almost as bad for while I write this I am in total torture with them; talk of a free passage I can hardly call this that for we worked our passage pretty well at the warping our hands were sore indeed pulling on the warping rope and those China men were so lazy and indifferent as to what time they got to Eliza that they seldome or ever gave us a hand & even then they were more in our way than being of much service; the banks of the river are loaded with vine trees and a good appearance of a luxuriant crop; We were Just 11 days come those 190 miles which is performed by a Steam Boat in one I say the next time I come it will be in Steamer; for its a long weary some voyage;

<sup>15</sup> Possibly José de la Rosa, called familiarly "Don Pepe," who had acted as a messenger to Montgomery during the Bear Flag revolt.

SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE

Done nothing. did not see M<sup>r</sup> Guitaris As Mills and the Capt were going to Marysville they met him and said he was going to Hawk [Hock] Farm the residence of Capt Sutter;<sup>16</sup> also that he had a job engaged with the Capt for us at 12 Dols per day everything dull looking here.

MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

First thing early in the morning Assisted in getting the remainder of the lumber out of the schooner; then Mills & I went with Capt towards Hawk Farm to see M<sup>r</sup> Guitarrus Met him about half way, we turned back; and he pointed out the ground on which he wanted the house erected — his promises were very flattering to us indeed; I assisted an engineer to measure 2 lots for M<sup>r</sup> G, after which my friend Mills & I cut a couple of trees to make blocks for foundation; Spent a very pleasant night Capt Sutter was in Eliza; I was introduced to him by M<sup>r</sup> G, we drank Champaign till all was blue got into conversation with a servant of the Capains an Irishman,<sup>17</sup> who is 5 years now campaigning with him; I plaid a few Tunes on the Cornopeon & delighted the inhabitants very much; — in good spirits this afternoon.

## TUESDAY 4

Morning pretty cool did not rise too early as I was a little unwell after the Champaign last night Cut the remainder of Blocks for house & we got the holes dug for them at foundation, the heat here in the middle of day exceeds all; I never knew what oppressive heat of sun was before, evening nice and cool

WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 1850

Got up very early & set to work and made a foundation plate; scarfed together, got it pretty near levelled; We begin to think that we have not got all the house from San Francisco M<sup>r</sup> Guitaris' kindness exceeds our anticipation Sent a letter this evening by steam Boat to Baird

## THURSDAY 6

The excessive heat here is intolerable: about noon we must remain a couple or 3 hours idle in shade of house Got foundation all level ready to commence but we unfortunately find no standards or uprights to support top bar, along the front and back of house. We told M<sup>r</sup> Guitaris that we cannot get on without having the Bottom frame with uprights I am very uneasy in mind, & regret Coming to Eliza.

FRIDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

Got up pretty early, Went out by myself to walk to ease my mind of the intolerable burthen of care on it by shedding floods of tears. Never was I in

<sup>16</sup> Sutter's Hock Farm lay on the Feather River a few miles below Marysville.

<sup>17</sup> Perhaps Edmund Bray.

such a state of mind. "O! My God" do thou relieve me, direct my goings, now when I see that I am in this Country since Easter day last earned I may [say] comparatively nothing to what my expenses were; and again see I have a Wife & child depending upon my exertions, *yes a wife I love more than worlds*, It drives me almost to madness; here we are detained; not having sufficient materials to Carry on with; the contract being only 250 dols, & now a fortnight of the time spent for nothing; when I reason thus is it any wonder my mind is in such a state: yet M<sup>r</sup> G is really so kind I should not complain so; he got a job from Capt Sutter for us to go to Hawk farm & build 2 China Houses. Made a pailing afternoon for M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries

SATURDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JUNE 1850

Houses Were to go up to Captain Sutters this morning but unfortunately the boat did not come up for them, likely because the Capt did not go home last night as he passed by here yesterday to Marysville; my mind in a very bad state of trouble I trust God shall give me patience; I have truly regretted coming to Calafornia, Yes and even I went farther, sorry that *I ever were born to such a world of trouble*; I can not for my own part, but I have left at home, even in Cloughfin, one whom I would feign make happy, but at present see little prospects of it. O Unfortunate being that I am, shall I give myself up to despair, and sink to the earth under my present perplexing state of mind. But I fondly hope for the sake of my Dear little family that the God of heaven will support me under those trials, and direct my future goings for the better; M<sup>r</sup> Guitarus promises to be my friend and makes me many kind offers but from my present state of mind I cannot now mention them I never knew what a troubled state of mind was till now, and in secret, unknown to any have I shed tears of sorrow for my rashness, & even blindness in Coming to this Country contrary to my dear Margts wishes; what the Cause of my perplexing state of Mind is principally because we have undertaken Certain Contracts which I fear we will not be able to perform; If either Mills or I knew a little of Carpentring atself we could earn a complete fortune in 8 or 10 months we might be worth 16 dollars per day, M<sup>r</sup> G. is about getting us the putting up of a large wooden frame 3 stores high to be covered with Canvass, but my study is Can we put it up God I hope will assist us, poor Mills keeps up Courage pretty well; he dont sink as I do, but he is not so situated I have a heavy charge at home —

SUNDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE 1850

This day thank God I am in some what better spirits than Yesterday Mills & I expect to go up tomorrow to Hawk Farm to put up 2 houses (china) for Captain Sutter; M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries has gone up today to dine with him Fell accidentally into Conversation at Dinner with a Country man a M<sup>r</sup> Kent Co Tipperary, who some 3 months ago with 3 others went over 14 miles across the Bay of San Francisco to Pueblo San Josey & took a farm from, a Spanyard

Old *Don Antonio*,<sup>18</sup> he gives them as much Beef as they choose to Consume & they only give  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the produce to him; 2 of them now go to the mines while the other two stay to mind the Farm till they come back. I am now sorry I did not go and do likewise, as Baird & Mills wanted;

MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup> AT HOCK FARM, THE RESIDENCE OF  
CAPTAIN SUTTER

This day we were awaiting the arrival of the Captains Sloop to bring us and the houses down. M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries was spending Yestarday at Sutters, did not come back till this morning and told us the sloop was on her way, to this [place]. We [were] looking out for her all day but she did not Come so we did not go to Hock Farm this day, we are angry at being dissappointed,

TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> HOCK FARM

After breakfast Mills and I started off to have blocks for foundations cut; M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries gave me a letter to Captain Sutter, we got to the opposite side of Sutters in about an hour from the time we left Eliza; we hailed across the river for to send us a boat to bring us over, after some half hours delay 2 Indians were dispatched for us, one of which had some little appearance of civilization, but the other, a man of about 35 years of age, was mother naked save a red Flannel shirt and red Cotton handkerchief tied round his head; I thought him rather a curious looking fellow, he was however very pleasant, looking & attentive, to us Found that Captain Sutter was at Sacramento, city gave the letter M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries handed me to young M<sup>r</sup> Sutter [J. A. Sutter, Jr.]; he said the Sloop was only gone for the house today; we dined at 12 and a very excellent dinner it was too about 16 Mechanics including his secretary & son was at table; After which Mills & I went to Cut blocks for foundation, while the old gardner (a German)<sup>19</sup> with 6 or 8 Indians, joined to level to the ground an old Douby house, in place of which the China house goes; After we had Cut all the blocks, we went out to the fields and in one there were about 80 Indians under the command of an old Irishman (a Tip)<sup>20</sup> reaping Barley a very excellent crop it was too, but they merely Cut as much of the straw as would admit of saving the grain, I had no idea they could cut so well those fellows work for Sutter in lieu of which he feeds them and gives them a trifle of money or cloths, Mills & I are rather depressed in spirits, thinking of us being so long in Calafornia & as yet earned nothing. We had supper at 7 first rate too but the Tea was much too weak; It was perfect Trash,  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7 the sloop came, and had but the one house tho M<sup>r</sup> G— let us to believe all along there were two going to Hock Farm; Very angry

<sup>18</sup> Kerr has previously referred to Antonio Peralta as "Don Antonio." Peralta, however, is evidently not the Spaniard mentioned here.

<sup>19</sup> Sutter's old Swiss gardener, Huggenberger, had died some time before this, according to Lienhard. The employee Kerr mentions here is evidently a recent immigrant.

<sup>20</sup> This was Edmund Bray, who came overland with the Elisha Stephens party in 1844. His MS narrative in the Bancroft Library, states that he was born in Tipperary in 1807.



at him for not sending with Captain of sloop, a Carpet bag with tools & clean cloths which according to his directions we left in a public house just beside where the lumber for house was lying and he promised us so sure he would send them with the house; When we were ready for bed we found there was neither bed or coverring for us; the answer we got was *Every person in Calafornia bring their own bed with them* Hard case thinks we to ourselves. We asked young [J. A.] Sutter [Jr.] Could he even give us blankets he had none for us, but gave 3 or 4 Mexican Paunches [ponchos] so on the bare boards we streatched ourselves for the night, with this Covering over us & I for my part seized on a boot Jack which I put under my head as pillow, the other Carpenters &c had their own Comfortable beds and we lying like Niggars on the hard plank, no lie to call this "*hard times.*"

WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

Mills & I arose at 4 oc rowed across the river and started off to Eliza for our Tools and Bed which were neglected being sent yesterday; we got down in hour or little more I was really angry at Guitaries for being so careless, about sending them with the sloop, as he promised so earnestly to do so, got back again to Hock Farm at 10 oc. We killed a snake 4 feet long coming back we were nearly treading on him: the old douby house not yet cleared off; tho we are not in too good Temper yet we cannot help bursting into Laughter the old Gardner who superintends the Indeans pulling down the old house; is all but entirely drunk; he knows not one word they say nor do they understand German language, but he says to one of them Carry two of those Brick or (sods) at a time, instead of running off with the one, the Indian of course took no notice, which vexed the old son of Baccus so that he took a brick in each hand & gave the poor Indian such a crack between the shoulders with them all of them as well as he to understand what he meant, and immediately obeyed; this old gardner next set the Indins to haul down and old wall which divides the Garden & Yard, the old Irishman (Bray) says the wall must be let alone, the other will have it down so a discussion arose here too. Bray spoke to the Indians in their own language, when they instantly stopped, but in course of an hour after when the other got the ground clear he made the Indians commence the wall again and levelled it to the ground; I feel very much fateagued my sides quite sore, after the bad nights rest, this Calafornia business makes a man *Cut his eye teeth* I am both in hot temper and also very low in spir-its, Mills much the same, after supper took my Cornopeon went by myself into a secluded place and played there a few solitary tunes the echo of which reverberated so beautifully thro the woods.

THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup>

Slept rather better last night, our bed tho stretched on the floor was easier than laying our ribs to them — the old douby house not all cleared off till after breakfast, what fool Guitaries must have been to send us here 2

days before the way was clear, on assorting the lumber belonging to it we find in addition to no roof or more than half enough of flooring boards Two or 3 of the principals wanting. However we commenced to put the frame together about 9 oc. Mills & I not satisfied here, having scarcely any person to speak to, till after working time, & even then only our friend the old Irishman & 2 American carpenters, & the Captain of the Sloop who is also a Yankee; My God did We 12 months ago when in our comfortable home, think we would so soon be so miserable in mind all the other hands about Hock Farm speak some Damnable language that we cannot understand, there are Dutchmen Germans Swisses English Irish Yankees, Indians, French; Spainyards Chilean, Mexicans & Peruvians, in fact I could hardly tell all the different Country men About Captain Sutters If he had two or 3 China men he would I think have his stock Complete; After work took my Cornopeon, went in solitude and played a few favourite Airs. day pretty cool

#### FRIDAY 14<sup>th</sup>

Putting up China house Mills & I feel very uncomfortable here; I think very little of Young [J. A.] Sutter [Jr.]<sup>21</sup> and his Sister [Eliza]; he is a concited looking whelp, as well as Ignorant, she I consider a very bold Masculine Girl; Mills says from the wag of her carriage & the nasty shake she gives the elbows when walking that she reminds him entirely of Miss Sh-r-lte L-w-ry, of Drum c.-w; but he says Miss Sutter cannot nor never will be so fine a person, notwithstanding, all the Fortune she may have, she is an only daughter; the mother [Anna Dubelt Sutter] is one of the same, tho more Lady like in appearance is just as deficient of common politeness as the others and from the appearance of her hands, she must have known what hard work was: she is a fretted looking woman, the whole 3 are knocking about the yard and houses from 4 oc in the morning till 9 at night and they are often seen holding a confab & looking at us at work. We dont of course know what they say, & perhaps its as well, we dont understand, for if they would be speaking impertinently about us we would not miss them. Miss Sutter Cooks or at least superintends the Tradesmens meals, she is decidedly a hard working girl tho very small its no silly joke to attend to the mess of from 15 to 20 people 3 times a day, and have the meals punctual to a minute their tables are just the best I see since I came to Calafornia, abundance of vegetables I am amused looking at a young pet Indian, whom they have put cloths on, he is in and out from the kitchen to the dining hall, and about the houses. Mills would like to pin one and see and tame him too but at present has not got time enough on hand, Captain Sutter arrived from Sacramento City this evening, After supper I started off, to Eliza for 2 of the principals of house that

<sup>21</sup> Often called "August." He was one of the founders of Sacramento City. He and Sam Brannan selected the site in the absence of Captain Sutter and much to the father's disgust.

were left, I walked pretty cautiously on the pathway for fear of treading on a snake and be poisoned by him

### SATURDAY 15<sup>th</sup>

Arose about 4 oc called M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries, [He]showed me a small American house 19x16 feet agreed with him to put it up for 90 dollars; then got the two pieces of china house and started off to Hock Farm; got there at 6. M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries Called here at 8 oc on his way to San Francisco I sent a letter with him to Baird. We are getting on pretty well with the China house had to pick out flooring for one of the rooms from among a pile of lumber lying in the yard. as we were at supper recvd intelligence by a steam boat that called, that San Francisco has been burned down again. 4 Blocks Completely laid in ashes except 8 houses, 300 Consumed, the part that now suffered: was that which escaped the last two fires namely from Karney St down to the wharfs, bounded on one side by Calafornia St & the other by that part of Clay st which was saved the last time, I am told part of one of the wharfs was slightly burned;

now the whole town I may say has been burned betwen what the last & this fire done I mean the business part of it, the fire origenated in a bake house, its a Dangerous place to have houses one day a man may be rich next day he rises finds his property Burned and himself a Beggar, some of the houses in Clay st that had just been got rebuilt Came in for [a] share of this fire also. Can San Francisco be a city if its burned down every 6 or 8 weeks so, a curse attends it and will till Gambling is put down;

### SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup>

Got out of bed at 6 oc Went to the river and had a good wash, and I was in black need of it my legs were crusted almost with dirt, a good deal of dust flies about here and it sticks to the perspiration, After breakfast Mills one of the American Carpenters & I went down to Plumas about 5 miles off and intended bringing up a skiff that lies there some 10 days, but belongs to Hock Farm, we saw there two store keepers, who came to Hock Farm yesterday for vegetables & had two ladies with them sisters to one of the young men, they They spoke badly of the reception they got at Sutters it was not so much matter only the young girls that were with them the hall door had been shut in their faces when they went to ask was the Capt at home, and the old lady pretended she did not know what they said, and every place Miss Sutter saw them she avoyed speaking, the fact is she did not speak to any of them, the Capt & son some short time ago was treated very kindly at one of their sisters wedding the young chap was gone to Sacramento; It is not the old chaps fault, he is a right descent fellow, by all accounts but is kept under by his Wife & children, he likes to see visitors but they Cannot bear the sight of one, he has given charge of the Farm & stock &c over to the son, who is about 17 years of age a pretty looking fellow to be the head of such

an establishment,<sup>22</sup> the old Capt may sleep on as long as he has got his daughter and wife, they will manage for him, But the Sutters have lost their reputé at Plumis We left it in the skiff about 12 was about an hour & a half getting a mile up the river where the Capt has 2 Frenchmen who care [for] his Horses We left the boat with them and walked back to Hock Farm got there by 3 oc past dinner time so we got none; "*first Come first served*" after supper Mills and I took a walk to the Indian village about 30 perches or so from the Farm yard, we walked right thro; they live in holes cleared out of the ground covered on top with Bull rushes,<sup>23</sup> they are very spacious some of them inside, even to hold as many as 20 or 30 Individuals, others are small those creatures must live most miserably most of them little better than naked, and I have seen some of the Women out side the Hut doors with not a single thing for a Covering but a small stripe of Calico or skin of some animal as the case may be tied carelessly round their hips (or loins) others have nothing at all on them those I dare say must have less modesty than the others, the generality of the men have some sort of Clothing but children from the breast up to 10 or 12 years all go naked, its really a disgusting sight to behold, I have observed two or 3 different companies playing at Cards for money & wished us to Join them; we of Course never thought of such a thing. I think there Cannot be less than 200 Indeans about Sutters place he has a couple of dozen living in his own yard, those are more Civilized and are some two or 3 years with him they all work for him and he pays them in cloths & food, they are exedingly fond of necklaces they have ropes of beads round their childrens necks & wrists; & all the men have holes in their ears thro which they stick a peg of cane about 4 inches long & ½ as thick as my little figure this they deem a great ornament.

#### MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup>

As usual up early at work got all the materials we had worked up by 3 oc. the house is ready to nail weather boards on for shingles & entirely finished but to hang the Doors and windows which cannot be done till its roofed so after supper we packed up our Traps and set off for Eliza again. M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries is to pay us for this Job, Sent another note to Baird by a Carpenter who worked at Sutters, that goes to San Francisco, this even We got to Eliza about 10 oc. Went then to bed as we were very tired for we had a Considerably weight in Bed & Tools Mills & I were deploring our present Condition, on the way down.

<sup>22</sup> Sutter had conveyed the Hock Farm property to his son to avoid its confiscation for debt. A part of the Sutters' distrust of settlers doubtless had arisen because of the squatters and the continued killing of Sutter's stray stock by butchers from Marysville and other towns.

<sup>23</sup> For a sketch of the Indian huts at Hock Farm see this *Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 3, facing p. 240.



## TUESDAY 18 ELIZA CITY

This day we done little Cut some blocks for foundation of the American frame; day pretty warm, some rumour that M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries had 2 houses burned in Sanfrancisco; last night a fire broke out in Marysville was extinguished before it done much harm —

## WEDNESDAY 19

Got the Bottom frame levelled & fitted Made 4 Corner posts, and put them in, little or no news here

THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup>

Got a good deal done to the house today Its true enough that Guitaries had two houses Consumed in the late fire, the ground floor of one he refused \$1000 per month for as a store, this loss must be considerable to the poor fellow. the Total loss of property by this fire is estimated to 8,000,000 of Dollars.

FRIDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JUNE 1850 ELIZA

We were at Work very early this morning & kept constant at it all day got the outside boards nailed by the sides.

(SATURDAY 22<sup>nd</sup>)

Have got the roof finished tacked the laths to the Seams where the boards meet, put in  $\frac{1}{2}$  the floor. This we consider a constant days work, and we are very tired this evening, after work Took 2 shirts went to the river & washed them, as I had no clean one with me for the morrow, but one I had made up at home which I am keeping for some state occasion. God knows any money a man earns in Calafornia, its dearly won, for he deprives himself of all the comforts & I may nearly say necessities of life, in addition to being burned up with a scurching sun, & blinded by the flying dust & eaten alive by Muskeatoes —

## (SUNDAY 23)

Very Warm day, after Breakfast went to the river and had a comfortable bathe the China men goes off to the mines but before they went they were where we stop discussing some money matter with young M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries: they spoke China language but they got enraged with each other Guitaries being spainyard seized a knife & would have stuck it into one of the China men had Mills & I not interfered & kept him back they were going to attack him & lick him only we would not let Guitaries be touched Mills & I would thrash a dozen of them.

SUNDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 1850

Lost my reckoning completely how so I cannot tell Was under the impression this was Monday; & worked all day yesterday Mills & I kept as Sunday & I did believe it was till today when I went to look for a door belonging to the house I am working at I heard preaching & singing of Hymns

in a public house, selling whiskey &c in one corner & the other corner a church, this looks rather odd. However as we kept from work yesterday we Continued our labour all this day What a strange thing. Calafornia is a queer place; when I who used to be so attentive to the observation of a Sabbath dont scarcely know when it comes here.

#### MONDAY 24<sup>th</sup>

Exceedingly warm day working at house I may say we have got it finished; how many people are leaving this for the mines; there is I am told a new place discovered some 100 miles from this, called the Gold Lake, where out of every 9 pans of dirt you wash a man is sure to have 7 of them with 2 oz each; this tells well;<sup>24</sup> Now I have not had a letter from home since the one I recvd<sup>d</sup> on the 23 of April: up to this Two letters are due I have recvd<sup>d</sup> none which makes me very uneasy; many an hour I spend thinking on those I have left behind & whom I have to provide for; but all the hardships & privations of this country, I consider as a pleasure If that after a little time I can return with something for my pains; I say now as I did some short time ago If I now were at Carrigans all the wealth of Calafornia would not induce me to leave my dear Margaret; But now its too late to talk thus — she wished to come with me, I said no, you remain here with your mother till I return — in the Evening Mills & I strung his foot net we tried to Catch fish in the river but from the depth of water we could not get out far enough, so after giving ourselves a good wetting we came back unsuccessful, and gone to bed; Perspiration falls off me in drops like rain.

#### TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup>

Morning cool, very warm in the middle of day Can do no more to the house we put up till we get locks & hinges, was doing a little at it till 10 oc Mills & I are thinking of going to the mines when M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries returns from San Francisco, he is expected daily. We Breakfast and dine in a French house here, and cannot help being surprized to find the prices of vegetables & other articles we have at Dinner, old potatoes 25 Cents per lb If new 45 cents, half dozen of very small scallions 1/6. 3 or 4 small turnips the size of my fist half a dollar, 1 small head of cabbage the size of my two hands 1/- peas one Dollar per lb, Beef 25 cent per lb salt 1/6 per lb about 2<sup>d</sup> worth of Bread in Ireland fetches 3/- here So I think things are pretty high; have commenced a letter for home.

#### WEDNESDAY 26<sup>th</sup>

We are now Kept idle again, have not got the Bottom frame of Iron house M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries wrote from San Francisco to say it was Burned in the late fire in Macondrays yard,<sup>25</sup> we expect him here every day if he were

<sup>24</sup> The Gold Lake rumor produced great excitement and like many others proved to be unfounded.

<sup>25</sup> The firm of F. W. Macondray and Co., commission merchants, on Sansome Street near Pine.

here when we get what money is coming to us Mills & I would start to the mines he & I wrote letters & enclosed them to Starkey to forward per the Steamer of the 1<sup>st</sup> July: mine was to M<sup>rs</sup> Kerr & Mills' was to his sister; begin to feel uneasy again in consequence of being kept idle;

THURSDAY 27<sup>th</sup>

Exceedingly warm; Went to the river and before breakfast time washed 3 pair of socks 2 shirts & 2 pocket Hkfs people flocking from here to the mines fast, & every steam Boat laden with passingers too; I dont know how it can be that every person seem to be doing well except us, but as long as we have our health & a bit to eat we cannot complain much. Scarcely know in what manner to spend our time O' but it hangs heavy I cannot even rest as well as I used at night from the disturbed state of mind; thinking very much about home, and what will become of me in this place, God I trust shall direct us; all the wealth of Calafornia is nothing to a man in comparison to Contentment, which under present circumstances there is no chance for me here — the steam boat from Sacramento has arrived no sign of Mr Guitaries nor even a letter, no persons on this earth can possibly be more miserable than Mills & I are today quite restless; the very idea of being kept idle in a Country that a man should work constant and hard, to get home the sooner almost drives us distracted but God will be good to us and give us patience. We are glad our friends at home have little idea of the many difficulties, we have to contend with in this Exiled Country, I often think shall I ever be permitted by the hand of providence to return again to my native soil; Could not sleep the greater part of the night so many thoughts Came into my head; Mills poor fellow similarly placed —

FRIDAY JUNE 28<sup>th</sup> 1850

This is my Dear James Andrews birth day: poor child he is now 2 years of age if alive little he knows the difficulties that his father has to contend with — what a wonder I could think of such an event in Calafornia; where we scarcely know one day or one month from another I see every person employed but Mills & I, there may however be a good time in store for us. How warm the sun shines My face and hands are completely tanned Brown with it *dont care, my hearts not in this Country* — If any of my friends at home saw me now they would not know me — both from the manner of my dress and the huge moustach and beard I grow. We must not care for appearances here — the Working man is best off; Steam Boat arrivd — this evening too, no appearance of our long expected Guitaries or letters. It surprises me that D<sup>r</sup> Baird dont write what a miserable time we spend here having nothing to do; striving to pass the time as easy as possible that hangs so heavy, evening we spent pretty easy got into a long conversation with the Frenchmen at whose place we diet

SATURDAY 29<sup>th</sup>

Sun rises very strong this morning every probability of an exceedingly warm day, If by any means Mills & I could raise a few dollars we would start off to the nearest Mines, I never knew what it was to want a shilling in my pocket till I came to Calafornia Now for the last 2½ months I had not the handling of a cent; for my own use, such is the state of things with me at present; But I came here voluntarily & in almost every measure contrary to the wishes of my friends; & Wife, consequently, must strive and be content with my lot; But God I trust out of this darkness will raise a shining light for me, whereby a means may turn up; to relieve my troubeled mind — Kept up my spirits tolerably with the hopes Guitaries would come this evening, but 4 oc came & not the slightest appearance. Could not describe by dissapointment after dinner Mills & I walked over as far as Marysville did not cross the river, on account of having no money it looks a rising little town; This evening Came into Conversation with the Capt of the schooner with whom some 3 weeks ago I gave a letter to Deliver to D<sup>r</sup> Baird in San Francisco, but he told me he only went as far as Sacramento & there got a Charter to Maysville he says when he goes down the next time he will deliver it, but perhaps he lost it for all I know Warmest Day we have had yet;

SUNDAY 30<sup>th</sup>

The heat of this country is really intolerable for any European to bear with for any lenght of time feel unwell took two pills after which I got a little relief. No sign of Guitaries coming yet we may give this up as a bad job, Mills & I purpose raising by hook or by crook as much as will bring us to the Nearthest mines Better we go there on Chance than stop here doing nothing — I think I suffered more this afternoon, by fretting & thinking on my present state, than I have yet — I am sure If I put in another week like the past, I would be in my grave for its impossible for any one to exist and their mind unoccupied but eternally fretting and pining in shade the Thermomiter ranged as high as to 110 degrees

MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 1850

Mills & I packed up a lot of our cloths & pistols &c Went off to Marysville to see them and raise some money to bring us to the mines; We first went thro some of the shops asking them if they wanted such articles as we had; but no use, I next took out my pocket handkerchief spread it on the ground under the shade of a tree and in the open street I was forced to cast the contents of my carpet bag, & sit by them to get them disposed of, after being there about 3 hours sold nothing save 1 pair of socks at 75 cents Mills entreated me to Come home again to Eliza — I tried another strong effort, got a bundle of socks over my Arm a Revolving pistol in my hand and went into every house I thought would be likely to require the like; tis true I stood a good many jest for some, but I was as wide awake for them too, I how-



ever managed to sell the pistol which was Dr Bairds for 16 dollars, the socks I sold to a fellow at 5 dollars per dozen, and told him I would go for the remaindr wich Mills had at our standing when I brought them to the Chap he began to find fault and the conclusion Came to that he did not want them. I then with 13 pair of socks over my arm marched thro' the streets once more determined to make a grand struggle to sell them and at last succeeded in getting 8 Dollars for the lot & the other beggar would not have them 3 dollars less, I gained by the transaction; I sold 1 single pair for 1 dollar to an Irishman an O Callaghan Co Louth, he is a long time in the States I had a regular confab with him; Mills then took 6 or 8 Cotton pocket hkfs in his hand marched thro' the shops got them disposed of for 1 Dollar while I at the same time dodged about in another end of the place with another revolver 3 paint brushes & a case of small pocket pistols in my hand. I went thro many of the houses, to no purpose. One fellow in a store offered me 10 Dollars for the lot, I said he might have them for 16 but he would not stand it, I went still on my way told mills the only offer I got he started me back again to take the 10 Dols but then he would not have them. So I had to put them in the bag and march home once more after disposing of 26 Dollars worth of things — this we found is not sufficient to fit us out for even the nearest mines. Spoke to young Mr Guitaries about 20 or 30 dols he had none or we should have it, but said he would seek the loan of it from some person; tried one or two acquaintances but they had no tin — We are yet as badly off as ever. Thermt' up to 95° I may say necessity has driven all shame out of our heads would we ever make such an effort at home to raise money its not likely but A man need not Care what he does in honesty to make a living people may talk as they will about the Gold of Calafornia ther is certainly gold in the country, but its very difficult to obtain it I never knew what it was to want money till I came into this miserable Country: I know well the value of it now and will appreccate its worth when I get any into my fingers again. only fancy us within 12 or 15 miles of the mines and cannot raise as much as would fit us out for a week atself

TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY 1850

Went to Bed last night as hopeless as ever, However Mr Guitaries felt for us arose early in the morning saw Mr Fendrick thought to borrow some off him but got none; at last he disposed of 25 dollars wort of scantling belonging to Iron House, even at a sacrafice to raise us the money; this with the 26 we raised ourselves yesterday gave us 51 to fit out with which we purpose and are preparing to start in the cool of the evening got the chance of riding two mules which a party here is going with to bring down two Comrades; we had all things ordered in the provision line & some paid for: and just gone down to see about the mules by this time it was 4 oc the Goveror Danah steam [sloop] was coming up when to my surpise as well as joy saw Doctor Baird

stepping out it is needles to mention How glad I was to see him so we gave up the idea of the mines for a few days longer; had some pleasant conversation thro the course of the afternoon, he had got no letter for me which makes me rather uneasy, got one for Mills dated 10 March, it said My Marg<sup>t</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Baird & Jenny were quite well & that she did not purpose writing by that Mail, but there had been another since. Starkey said to D<sup>r</sup> Baird part of his letters were left behind at Panama which I think mine will be amongst; & will likely be at Sanfrancisco by the 15<sup>th</sup> —

#### NOTE.

It will be observed that from this date till Sunday following I had been lying in fever, & some slight touches of Ague; consequently kept no Journal; It was fortunate D<sup>r</sup> Baird was here to attend me: never had I been so ill before, the Almighty does everything for the better, for If we had sufficient money on Monday we would start off early the next day. If that I took the like sickness there it was one hundred chances to 1 that I might loose my life, from the exposure

#### WEDNESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

Took to bed. had some pills given me. felt rather better by night.

#### THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup>

Very ill got myself bleed for the first time in my life exceedingly weak

#### FRIDAY 5<sup>th</sup>

Rather worse, quite feverish. very thirsty bad taste on my mouth

#### SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup>

Thought I was better this morning went to the river had a bath took a Cup of Coffee about 9 oc went to bed rather worse. severe attack of Ague; M<sup>r</sup> Guitaries arrived this evening & a half dozen of German, Duchth Hungarians & French with him: among which is the Prince Paul of Wertimburg

#### SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup>

Feel very much better; but sill weakly could not help laughing at seeing the old Prince Black his own Boots standing in the door of his apartment with nothing but a long night shirt on; think to myself no respect for the like of you here "*altered times.*" He is a right jolly old cove about 50 years of age and might weigh 16 stone, he was away shooting most of the day brought back a few birds and two snakes 4 feet long each which I see him handle like eels they are dead but he is to preserve them in Whiskey.<sup>26</sup> Heard that one Yankee shot another at Marysville today; heard no further particulars about it; towards night got rather worse again John is however very attentive to me —

<sup>26</sup> Paul Wilhelm, Herzog von Württemberg, had traveled up the Missouri and into the Rockies during the early years, 1822-1830. He doubtless traveled for adventure, although Kerr's statement indicates that he collected animals for scientific purposes during this trip to California.

MONDAY, 8<sup>th</sup>

Feel pretty well this morning tho slept badly all night. Mr Guitaries came back today from Hock Farm; I boarded him for money the minute he came;

he gave me \$100 dols this is all I could get off him with the 25 I got from the Brother is all Mills & I have for our time in this place he of Course paid 3 dols per day each for our Board We had been nicely taken in; but as he has been burned out at San Francisco it is well we got anything at all from him. I am sure he has not a *rap* but as he gets an order from Old Sutter; got ill again towaids night; the Old Prince Paul is very noisy talks all night nearly and so loud that he Can be heard nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile, he has always a companion talking with him; he (the Prince) had regular washing today, socks, Shirts, drawers, Pkt. Hkfs & other articles; Baird & Mills shooting the most of the day, got a few Squirrels & a Partridge or two.

TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>

Exceedingly warm day. I slept rather better last night, tho perspired a good deal Baird & Guitaries went to spend the day at Hock Farm so did Prince Paul & those hungarians which Came here with him; I had been better today than I had yet, but still I feel weakly and dont wish to stir about much; Mills & the Capt of the Barque Chase & a few others went this evening to Haul the scene [seine], they got a few small fish, would have more if it were not that the net was entangled some How;

WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>th</sup>

I had a very good nights rest, Guitaries & the Doctor came home about 1 oc this morning well lined with Old Sutters Champaign. it must be pretty good for they appeared to do it every sort of justice, Baird said they spent a very pleasant day Mr<sup>s</sup> or Miss Sutter did not make their appearance, being indisposed [Peter H.] Burnett the Governour, & the Vice Governour of Calafornia were there; some of the Company asked Burnett had he ever been at Hock Farm before; his reply was Yes I passed here two years ago driving a waggon and yolk of oxn, up to the mines; this caused a hearty laugh, only fancy the Governour of Calafornia, driving a waggon,<sup>27</sup> the Yankees take a wist at everything I spent, a pretty good day not much sick; still weak John tells me its better I go down to San Francisco as he thinks I will not get stout till I leave this warm Climate; I prepare to go tomorrow They Hauled the scene this morning got snagged & had to cut a hole in the centre of it to free it they mended it & cast it again in the evening but got nothing.

THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup>

Pretty well today slept well all night, agreed that I go to San Francisco this morning by the Gov Danah, & that Baird & Mills should follow after in a day or two in Cpts Boat & bring our luggage he is sending down for pro-

<sup>27</sup> Burnett had been retained as attorney by J. A. Sutter in the settlement of creditors claims. See Burnett's *Recollections and Opinions*, pp. 286-88.

visions he will give them a free passage. Capt Ricketson of the Chase is a right descent fellow & tho we were but strangers to him yet I saw more kindness with him than I could expect from one I had a regular acquaintance with all my life; I started at 9 oC on the Gov Danah steam Boat, got to Sacramento City at 2 oC Went then on the Gold Hunter, which sailed on the arrival of the Danah, and got to San Francisco at 11 oC at night. the whole route Cost me 33 Dollars, 10 from Eliza to Sacramento & 1½ for Dinner, 20 from Sacramento to San Francisco & 1½ for Supper. I slept all night in Crawford's; felt very well coming down

#### FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup>

Went to the Carpenter that lives the house we had from Crawford, as Baird told me they would be attentive to me & civil, got the key of our Iron house from him. Went in & found everything Crammed away in confusion I However Manage to clear away the outside room & fit up for myself, Great enquiries about the Doctor, when will he be back one says, & when will he be back another says, he appears to be quite a favourite here. I find M<sup>r</sup> Neville (the Carpenter) & his family very attentive indeed notwithstanding that they are all very ill themselves with a Cold Cleaned myself up Went down the City Called at Starkeys & to my sad disapointment no letters for me, what in earth can be the matter with my dear Margaret God grant all may be well with her, words can scarcely express my uneasiness of mind got no letter since the 26<sup>th</sup> April; now nearly 3 months; I next went to see M<sup>r</sup> Liddle the Fore man in Maurs Factory in Liverpool he was glad to see me; was sorry he did not see me before I went to Eliza he could give me 10 Dols per day since, but says he will soon have something to do for me, he & Hendren came up to see me in the evening spent a few hours here; felt rather cold in the evening.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Seventy-five Years in California.** A history of events and life in California: Personal, political and military. By William Heath Davis. San Francisco: John Howell, 1929. (Lakeside Press, Chicago.) xxxii, 422 pp. Pls. Ills. 8°.

"When this State, imperial in its dimensions, shall have grown to an empire itself, great will be the interest as to what were its beginnings, and as to what manner of men they were who founded it."

Four decades have elapsed since this forecast was made, but during that interval the terms of its prediction have been fulfilled. Always magnificent in its dimensions, California in its other features has achieved a greatness the growth of which is elsewhere unsurpassed.

To have lived for eighty-seven years is in itself an unusual accomplishment, but to have lived through seventy-five of those years with a clear vision and an active consciousness of the men that have passed and of the events that have transpired, is a much rarer accomplishment, and one permitted to but few. William Heath Davis, born in Honolulu in 1822, first came to California in 1831 as a cabin-boy on board the trading vessel *Louisa*. He returned for the second time the following year, but when he came again in 1838, he remained a continuous resident until his death in 1909.

"Sixty Years in California" first appeared in 1889. It immediately attracted close attention and aroused wide-spread interest. As a narrative it differed entirely with the existing histories, substantial and extensive as they were. Davis brought together a very diversified assortment of facts and episodes that are not to be found to any great extent in civil, political or industrial histories. It received much favorable commendation and had the unusual distinction of being recommended by the State board of education as a book worthy of being added to all of the school libraries.

Under these conducive circumstances the work speedily became out of print. It was the purpose of Mr. Davis to prepare a revised edition which would be augmented by additional matter and subsequent material. For fifteen years amidst difficulties he labored upon it consistently and faithfully and wrought it into completion. He was awaiting a publisher when the great shadow of 1906 fell across San Francisco, which ruthlessly disturbed all plans and dissolved many visions. In that calamity his valuable manuscript disappeared and it has never since been found.

Few who have come to California have had the advantages that William Heath Davis had, and fewer yet have cited their observations or recorded their impressions. His are widely extensive but never verbose.

When he first saw California the missions were in the height of their glory, populous and prosperous. When, in 1838, he returned to make his permanent

sojourn, the missions had been despoiled by the government and desecrated by the civil authorities. He lived through what has fittingly been termed "The Splendid Idle Forties," when California was a lotus-land and each succeeding day was *mañana*. He was here during the exciting period of the Conquest and while he took no active part therein, he was sufficiently near to the scenes to be enabled to offer an account at first-hand. He was fully aware of the significance of the discovery of gold and of its far-reaching effects. He saw San Francisco grow from a squalid little beach-village of less than two hundred inhabitants to the great metropolis of more than a half-million. He survived to witness in sadness the destruction in 1906 of that great city of which he had been one of the founders. More unhappily for him also was the loss of his rewritten narrative and all hope of its publication, which had been the absorbing ambition and the chiefest comfort during his declining years.

William Heath Davis was an active and vital participant in the day and generation of which he has written so well and convincingly. He gives much concerning the padres and their simple but untiring mission life; of the character of the early Californians, Spanish and American; the gallant men and the charming women; their social and domestic life; their occupations, sports and diversions; their mercantile methods and operations; of the American traders and merchants; of the fur-trade and the traffic in hides and tallow which were the chief domestic products for barter; of aguardiente and bodega stories; of the founding of cities; of land-grants and ranchos; and he has preserved many events and episodes of that colorful and romantic period.

The Conquest has been treated at some length and with purposeful authority. An American himself, he well knew the feelings of the American settlers. Having lived for a number of years under the native government and having been married to a fair member of one of the best of the Spanish-Californian families, he full well knew their attitude toward the Americans. He declared Stockton to have been the real conqueror of California, and his estimate is correct although his admiration of the commodore is perhaps somewhat fervid. Of Fremont, Davis leaves no uncertainty and his statements have been fully sustained and amplified by subsequent investigation. Fremont was a selfish, unscrupulous, scheming, incompetent individual and a conspicuous failure. His importance was self-arrogated. If as "Pathfinder" he began in heroic greatness, his later life was characterized throughout by pitiful smallness.

Much of the character of William Heath Davis is reflected from the pages of his admirable book. Not only was he one of the founders of San Francisco, but he was also the founder of the prosperous city of San Diego. A man of many affairs, he was in 1848-49 a member of the Town Council of San Francisco. He possessed considerable scholarship and was active in the cause of education, being one of those who established the first public school in that city. Davis was affable, courteous and broad-minded, and these with the rarer attributes of integrity gained for him the respect of his contemporaries. Bancroft, who knew

him and his work intimately, has said that if Davis ever had an enemy it is not apparent in any chapter of his book. He had an abiding faith in the future greatness of San Francisco as indeed of all California, which he lived to see amply justified. His subsequent life was the unhappy history of many of those earliest Californians. Unjustly treated by the government, harassed by litigation and unmerited losses, he saw his once great fortune decline and many of his contemporaries pass on. His final years were passed in semi-obscurity, but he retained his courage and dignity to the end. His material fortune had dissolved, but to California he left the great heritage of his varied experiences.

Three years ago John Howell had a vision which is now realized in the present volume. The original text of "Sixty Years in California" has been reprinted without change. For the ultra-modern historian Davis may have been "unscientific," but the accuracy of his facts is strongly intrenched and is not to be easily disturbed. In the original edition as a consequence of dictation and indifferent proof-reading, many errors occurred in the spelling of proper and local names, and Spanish words and phrases, which in the new edition have been corrected. Mr. Howell has contributed a pertinent preface of explanation, and the extended historical foreword prepared by Mr. Douglas Watson is an admirable essay of much merit. The Appendix contains a few documents of value which Mr. Davis had intended for his projected work.

The result is a well-printed, substantial and attractive volume of about 450 pages, which is further enriched by the addition of 45 plates of portraits, views and facsimiles of documents, some of which now appear for the first time. A series of vignettes illustrative of Californian history embellish each chapter-heading. The work is a credit to its publisher, and should commend itself widely to all who are interested in the lesser-known and widely-divergent features of the early history of this state. Finally, it is a fitting tribute to the memory of that fine old pioneer, its author.

ROBERT ERNEST COWAN.

**An Overland Journey to California in 1852. The Journal of Richard Owen Hickman. Edited by M. Catherine White. Sources of Northwest History No. 6, State University of Montana, Missoula [1929]. 22 pp. 8°. [Reprinted from the March, 1929, number of *The Frontier*, published at the State University of Montana.]**

Hickman's journal is an intimate and vivid account written in the form of diary-letters to his stepmother in Illinois. The emigration of 1852 was enormous, "as far as the eye can reach to the east and to the west, nothing is to be seen but large trains of wagons and stock," along the dusty road. Some packed their cattle, some packed wheelbarrows or pulled hand-carts and a few traveled with packs on their backs. Discarded baggage, books, furniture and small articles lined the way, as well as the graves of the dead and small groups clustered about the dying, for cholera, measles and smallpox played havoc with the trains. West of the Sierra the famishing people were met by so-called "relief trains"

from California. The accusation is made that certain ones appointed to administer these relief parties made gain for themselves "by striping and huckstering the emigrants out of their last shilling and then getting the remainder of their stock for a trifle." The Journal concludes with the traveler's first impressions of the Yuba mines and Sacramento City — then "knee deep" in ashes and mud.

Richard Hickman remained in California eleven years, and later made three trips into Montana, where he finally became established as a prominent business man and politician.

C. L. C.

**The Pioneers of California. By Robert Ernest Cowan. San Francisco: The Society of California Pioneers, 1929. 12 pp. Port. 8°.**

"An address made at the Members' Meeting of the Society of California Pioneers on October 2, 1928, at the time that Mr. Cowan was elected an Honorary Member of the Society." The pioneers eulogized are those of the first year of the Gold Rush. This address first appeared in the March, 1929, issue of the *Quarterly* of the Society of California Pioneers.

C. L. C.

**Flags that have flown over California. By Philip Baldwin Bekeart. San Francisco: Printed for the Author [Reprinted from the Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers, March, 1929]. 27 pp. Front. 8°.**

The flags flown in California were those of Spain (1541-1822), England (1579), Russian American Company (1809-1841), Buenos Aires (1818), Mexico (1822-1846), Bear Flag (1846), and the United States (1846-). The flag of Buenos Aires is included because of the activities of Hippolyte de Bouchard and his filibusters in the ships *Argentina* and *Santa Rosa*. They established no government nor form of one. Surely by these tokens, it would be well to include the flag of the "sovereign and independent State of Deseret" — thus adding another to Mr. Bekeart's list.

C. L. C.

**William H. Russell, Originator and Developer of the Pony Express. By Victor M. Berthold. [Reprinted from "The Collectors Club Philatelist."] New York, 1929. 19 pp., 8°.**

In this brief article Dr. Berthold, the well-known authority on early western express stamps and franks, has collected much information on the life, character and accomplishments of William H. Russell, the genius of the Pony Express. The account is very fully documented and should prove of value to students of the stagecoach era. A foreword by H. C. Needham gives a general picture of the Pony Express and its operations.

C. I. W.



## MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

On Tuesday, March 26, 1929, the Society held a luncheon meeting at the Clift Hotel. The speaker was Dr. Lucy Lockwood Hazard, of Mills College, and her subject was "Eden to Eldorado." Under this title she reviewed the writings of Bret Harte as portraying life in California and as expressing the opinions of the community. She found the latter much influenced by the doctrines of Rousseau and representing a marked reaction from those of Calvin under whose guidance many of the populace had made a start. The theme was illustrated by numerous references to the writings of Harte and the evolution of the new spirit traced in its accelerated development under the California conditions.

There were present thirty-five members and guests.

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On Tuesday, April 30, 1929, the Society met at luncheon at the Clift Hotel. Miss Alice Eastwood, of the California Academy of Sciences, spoke on "The History of Golden Gate Park." She reviewed the early struggles to obtain a park and to make it as large as the vision of its sponsors demanded that it should be. A tribute was paid to the first Board of Park Commissioners and to some of the early benefactors. The speaker then described the steps of reclamation from sand dunes to planted park and spoke feelingly of the services of John McLaren in achieving the results now so familiar. The latter part of the address dealt with the great variety of trees and shrubs that are to be found in the park, saying that in no other place in the country were so many species gathered together. After Miss Eastwood had finished speaking, the chairman asked Mrs. George J. Bucknall, whose stepfather, Eugene L. Sullivan, had been one of the first Park Commissioners, to say a few words. In reply she told of some of Mr. Sullivan's efforts in the early and trying days.

Forty members and guests were present.

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On Tuesday, the 21st of May, 1929, a luncheon meeting was held at the Clift Hotel. Mr. Fred H. Greely, of Marysville, Past Grand President of the Native Sons, spoke on "Pioneers and Pioneer Native Sons of Marysville." He enumerated various people who became distinguished in State and Nation, and who made their start in Marysville, commenting on each briefly. He then told of his own boyhood there, and subsequent return with his family to their old homestead in Maine. After a sojourn of some years there, the family returned to Marysville over the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads during the first month of through travel. In closing his remarks he called attention to the remarkable era through which he had lived which covered the time from the tallow dip to the electric light and which had given him the opportunity to see with his own eyes all forms of transportation over the Sierras from the covered wagon to the aeroplane.

There were twenty-three members and guests present.

ANSON S. BLAKE.

## NEW MEMBERS

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Aikin, Ilo R., M.D., Oakland

Aikin, Mrs. Ilo R., Oakland

California Real Estate Association, Glenn D. Willaman, State Secretary,  
Los Angeles

Carter, Charles Franklin, Waterbury, Conn.

Girdner, Miss Margaret V., San Francisco

Kaime, Miss Laura S., Santa Barbara

McCulloch, Alexander, San Francisco

McDevitt, M., San Francisco

Ryder, David Warren, San Francisco

Snook, Miss Caroline Anstey, San Francisco

Sullivan, Noël, San Francisco

Tuthill, Mrs. J. B. T., Saratoga

University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Ill.

## IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM MACPHERSON FITZHUGH

July 27, 1853—May 19, 1929

William M. Fitzhugh, a member of this Society since its reorganization, passed away at his home in this city, May 19, 1929.

Mr. Fitzhugh was born in Catoctin, Maryland, July 27, 1853, and at an early age came to California. He was one of the first graduates of the University of California and had an active part in planting and surveying the campus.

As a young man he helped in the development and surveying of Golden Gate Park and was the first to plant lupin to lay the sand dunes.

Taking an active interest in politics in the days of the reorganized Democracy, he was elected City and County Surveyor and City Engineer, and served from 1892 to 1894, inclusive. He was at the same time a member of the Election Commission of the City and County, serving with that other noted Californian, Harry Creswell.

His was a very active life, his profession taking him to all parts of the world—to Tibet, to Siberia, to Alaska. For a time he was associated with John Hays Hammond, the noted California engineer.

In 1909 he went to Wyoming, and at Salt Creek oil fields laid the foundation for the fortune which he used in the betterment of his city, San Francisco.

He was greatly interested in the early history of California, and of San Francisco in particular, and after the fire was one of the first to show his faith in the future of the city by improving some of the burnt lots with magnificent structures, notably the Fitzhugh Building on Post and Powell streets.

He gave the Academy of Sciences the collection of Indian baskets of Professor Lowe of Los Angeles, which were to have been sold at auction in San Francisco. The writer was present in the auction room where the baskets were being arranged for sale, and Mr. Fitzhugh, passing by, made inquiry as to what was going on. Being told the baskets were to be sold at auction, he said it would be a shame to break up such a collection, and asked if he could purchase them as a whole. Arrangements were made, and Mr. Fitzhugh bought the entire collection and presented it to the California Academy of Sciences. Since then he added many pieces to that noted collection.

Mr. Fitzhugh was married in 1888 to Mary Eccleston Marsh, who survives him, together with one son, William Fitzhugh, and one daughter, Miss Marion Fitzhugh.

His was an active and busy life, and his many friends in the Historical Society and the city at large regret his early passing.

D. Q. TROY.



